

# HERITAGE OF BEAUTY

Daniel Johnson Fleming

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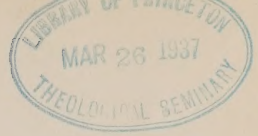


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*Pictorial Studies of  
Modern Christian Architecture in Asia and Africa  
Illustrating the Influence of  
Indigenous Cultures*

BY  
DANIEL JOHNSON FLEMING

*Union Theological Seminary, New York*

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BY DANIEL JOHNSON FLEMING

ETHICAL ISSUES CONFRONTING WORLD CHRISTIANS

VENTURES IN SIMPLER LIVING

WHITHER BOUND IN MISSIONS

ATTITUDES TOWARD OTHER FAITHS

MARKS OF A WORLD CHRISTIAN

WAYS OF SHARING WITH OTHER FAITHS

HELPING PEOPLE GROW

BUILDING WITH INDIA

CONTACTS WITH NON-CHRISTIAN CULTURES

DEVOLUTION IN MISSION ADMINISTRATION

SCHOOLS WITH A MESSAGE IN INDIA

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## CONTENTS

*Entrance to Chapel (Presbyterian), Hwaiyuen, China*      *Frontispiece*

### INTRODUCTION

"THE GLORIES AND TREASURES OF THE NATIONS"      9

### AN EXPANDING KINGDOM

LIGHT THROUGH EGYPTIAN WINDOWS      18

*The Church of Jesus the Light of the World, Old Cairo, Egypt*      19

A STOREHOUSE OF PRIMITIVE CHRISTIAN RITES      20

*Interior of a Coptic Church*      21

FROM DAMASCUS TO ALASKA      22

*The Russian Church, Sitka*      23

AMONG THE SCATTERED ISLANDS OF THE PACIFIC      24

*Chapel of the Papauta Girls' School, Samoa*      25

*Interior of Chapel, Papauta*      25

FOLLOWING THE TRAIL OF SPAIN      26

*The Cathedral of St. Mary and St. John, Manila*      26

### HAWAII

CULTURAL VARIETY IN A SINGLE CITY      27

AMERICAN INFLUENCE IN THE PACIFIC      28

*Central Union Church, Honolulu*      29

THE WESTMINSTER ABBEY OF HAWAII	30
<i>Kawaiahao Church, Honolulu</i>	31
THE CHURCH OF THE CROSSROADS	32
<i>The Church of the Crossroads, Honolulu</i>	33
THE CASTLE-CHURCH OF HONOLULU	34
<i>Makiki Christian Church (Japanese), Honolulu</i>	35
PAYING TRIBUTE TO A MOTHER CULTURE	36
<i>The First Church of Christ (Chinese), Honolulu</i>	37

### CHINA

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF CHINESE ARCHITECTURE	38
ST. ANDREW'S, WUCHANG	41
<i>St. Andrew's, Wuchang</i>	41
THE DREAM OF AN ANNAMITE PRIEST	42
<i>The Cathedral at Phat-Diem, Indo-China</i>	42
A CHINESE PRAYER AND MEDITATION HALL	44
<i>Twinem Memorial Prayer Hall, Nanking</i>	45
A CHINESE CHURCH INTERIOR	46
<i>Interior of the Presbyterian Church, Nankhsuchow</i>	47
A PRAYER GARDEN	49
<i>The Prayer Garden, Presbyterian Church, Hwaiyuen</i>	48

### JAPAN

IN DEFERENCE TO BUDDHIST ENVIRONMENT	50
<i>Christ Church, Nara</i>	51



THE SAVIOR OF JAPAN ALSO	52
<i>Smith Memorial Chapel, Hikone</i>	53
JAPANESE REACTIONS	55
<i>Chapel of St. Pierre and St. Paul (Roman Catholic), Nara</i>	54
INDIA	
A TWO HUNDRED DOLLAR CHAPEL	56
<i>Chapel of Sherman Memorial Girls' High School, Chittoor</i>	56
<i>Interior of Chapel, Chittoor</i>	57
A CHRISTIAN PRAYER MANDAPAM	59
<i>The Chapel of the Social Center for Women, Vellore</i>	58
PROVIDING AN ATMOSPHERE OF BEAUTY	60
<i>The Chapel of the Women's Christian College, Madras</i>	61
NATURALIZING CHRISTIANITY	62
<i>The Chapel of the Christu-kula Ashram, Tirupatur</i>	62
<i>Detail of Gateway, Tirupatur</i>	63
THE CHANCEL AT TIRUPATUR	64
<i>The Chancel at Tirupatur</i>	65
A CHURCH IN A MOSLEM ENVIRONMENT	66
<i>All Saints' Memorial Church, Peshawar</i>	67
USING LOCAL MOTIFS	69
<i>Interior of All Saints' Church, Peshawar</i>	68
WHERE THE CULTURAL BACKGROUND IS COMPLEX	70
<i>Wesleyan Methodist Church, Nirmal, Hyderabad</i>	71
REGARD FOR INDIAN TASTES	72
<i>The Church at Ushagram, Bengal</i>	73

OPEN-AIR PLATFORMS AS CENTERS FOR WORSHIP	74
<i>Village Worship Platform at Barka, Ghaziabad District</i>	74
<i>Village Worship Platform at Arthala, Ghaziabad District</i>	75

STAYING WITHIN VILLAGE RESOURCES	76
<i>The Church at Piploda, Rajputana</i>	77

A CATHEDRAL-LIKE CHURCH FOR OUTCASTES	78
<i>The Church at Medak, Hyderabad</i>	79

A GEM OF SINGHALESE ARCHITECTURE	80
<i>The Chapel of Trinity College, Kandy, Ceylon</i>	81

## AFRICA

THE PROBLEM IN AFRICA	82
<i>Building a Church in Southern Nigeria, West Africa</i>	83
<i>A Typical Church Interior, Tanganyika Territory</i>	85

AN EXPANDED HUT AS CATHEDRAL	86
<i>The First Cathedral, Namirembe, Uganda</i>	87

CONTRIBUTING ARCHITECTURE TO A CONTINENT	88
<i>Presbyterian Church, Elat, French Cameroun</i>	89

## PAINTING

A MOVEMENT TOWARD NATIVE PAINTING	91
<i>"The Shepherds," by Luke Ch'en</i>	90

## SYMBOLISM

SYMBOLISM IN THE EXPANSION OF CHRISTIANITY	92
<i>Detail of Windows, Divinity School of Stevenson College, Ahmedabad</i>	93
<i>Shrine of the House of the Merciful Savior, Wuchang</i>	94



# “THE GLORIES AND TREASURES OF THE NATIONS”

## AN INTRODUCTION

ONE of humanity's greatest needs at this time is to develop a consciousness of a world community. Mankind as a whole has to be considered in any adequate solution of an increasing number of great problems which affect the entire world. We need, therefore, to become world-conscious and to develop a community spirit that shall reach out to all mankind. Anything which, however indirectly, helps to convince humanity of its underlying unity or which aids an understanding and an appreciation of other peoples is a step toward genuine fellowship in the life of nations, and hence is meeting a need today. It is hoped that this volume may provide one small strand in that cable of appreciative understanding which is to girdle the world.

But to twentieth-century Christians there is an even more specific and imperative summons. Within the world community, and doubtless the greatest influence making for its fullest realization, is the Christian world fellowship—a fellowship which is no political federation of the world, no mere brotherhood of man, transcending all differences of race and nationality, but a community which progressively embodies the Christian faith, renewed distinctively by worship of God through Jesus Christ. This universal Christian community exists potentially wherever Christian hearts bow down in worship, whether in thickly populated cities or in the countless villages of the earth. The times demand that each Christian, whether in Asia, in Africa or in the West, allow a sense of this world-wide Christian fellowship to become a conscious reality in his life.

Intellectually, we know that Christian witnesses have gone “to the uttermost parts of the earth,” and that “their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.” We rejoice in those ancient promises that “all nations shall serve him,” and that “he shall have dominion from sea to sea.” We speak of certain catholic epistles and understand that this term means that they were addressed to the Christian church as a whole. But all too often we fail to take into our inner consciousness that note of universality which was sounded of old by various biblical writers and which sorely awaits re-emphasis in our own day. Theoretically, we believe in a Christian order in which every good and every truth of the natural or the social order can find a place. But this can

become real to us and be emotionally accepted only if we are prepared to make the necessary effort of sympathy and understanding. To remain passively unaware of cultural embodiments of Christianity other than our own, is to limit our conception of a supra-national fellowship.

Increasingly, however, we are attempting to lay aside prevailing localisms that grow out of limited and parochial thinking, and are catching the vision of a world-wide church. We are not satisfied to think of ourselves as belonging merely to an American, a British, a Japanese or an Indian group of Christians; but are striving to attain a loyalty and an attitude of mind that consciously and unconsciously will reveal that we are citizens of a universal kingdom. We recognize that, for Christians, the word community should have a universal, a catholic, an ecumenical connotation. Any objective approach, therefore, which helps us to gain a sense of the wide diffusion of the church and to acquire more understanding of its truly multi-national, multi-racial character should be of help. It is hoped that these studies and pictures will help one to realize that there are many centers from which extensions of the world-wide church are being made.

But a problem at once arises. What is the relation of culture to religion? Granting that the church possesses universal truth, should this truth express itself through universal symbols, or should it take on local cultural modes? In introducing Christianity to a new social group, in helping a people to build and decorate its churches and to choose its hymns and pictures, should one strive to conform to existing local tastes, or aim to develop appreciation for traditional ecclesiastical art which came to acceptance in other ages and areas? In particular, should the peoples most active in the expansion of Christianity, during this and the preceding century, naïvely assume that Western forms are to constitute those universal symbols; or, in countries which have a distinctive artistic development, should they rather adjust these forms to the indigenous background and even set about preserving and vitalizing the native heritage?

To some persons these questions present no problem. Such persons point to certain evidences of the emergence of a common world culture and show that the cleft between Occident and Orient is not so great as formerly. They see ancient cultures breaking into bits under the influence of modernity and meet Orientals who want Occidentalism with all improvements, if they want it at all. To them, therefore, the clash of cultures involved in the introduction of modern methods of business and education, religion and social service, church symbols and architecture, into the scene of an ancient civilization does not seem to be serious.



It is easy, however, to exaggerate this trend toward a common world culture and to anticipate a conclusion that must take slow centuries to complete. The innumerable villages of the world, unlike the cities, will continue to illustrate the fact of the slowness of change. The oncoming Christian world community will hardly be made up of a monotonous uniformity. In any future with which we can be concerned there will certainly be local and differentiated cultures. A knowledge of this should have its effect on the question whether unessential westernisms should be transplanted without serious consideration of possible results.

As a consequence of regional conditions of climate and of historical and religious influences, each people is still expressing itself in certain peculiar and well defined artistic ways which show themselves in taste and sentiment and thus constitute for that people a living language. Sometimes these native moods and gifts become consecrated to our Lord, thus naturalizing Christianity. When this comes about the Christian churches of Asia and Africa speak to their own as they never could through Gothic, Greek or other Western forms, ritual and architecture. The message becomes embodied not only in words but also in music, color and stone. As at Pentecost, men exclaim, "Behold now we hear, every man in our own language wherein we were born!"

It is this awareness of distinctive cultures—even a rejoicing that such differences remain—that leads a distinguished leader in the Near East, when he dreams of a future Christianized environment, to think "not of Gothic architecture, but of Moorish buildings; not of church steeples with crashing church bells, but of graceful minarets and the call to prayer to the true God as revealed in Christ; not of public worship concentrated in one day in the week, but distributed throughout the week by daily prayer, especially at the noon hour as now in Moslem lands; not of a Western Christian service dominated by human exhortation and the appeal to intellect alone, but a worship of meditation and adoration which we of the West have almost lost." To recognize the validity of such cultural differentiations is to affirm the catholic character of the Christian church.

There was a time when Christendom meant Europe. But the Christian church must no longer be identified with any one civilization; it is supra-cultural. As long as we of the West continue to associate our religion only with European or American modes of expression of the Christian experience, we continue to be medieval and to fail to enter into the full meaning of Christian unity—a unity so strongly centered that it can welcome diversity. Moreover, if we

do not disengage Christianity from its Western localisms and accessories, it may as a consequence be rejected by a critical and disillusioned Orient.

The task of separating in Christianity what is essential from that which is purely incidental demands the highest spiritual sensitiveness and discrimination. Nothing is easier than to overestimate or to underestimate those institutions which have been characteristically associated with one's own religion. Many of the forms of ecclesiastical procedure and of outward organization associated by the Western missionary with his faith have grown out of the social and cultural characteristics which have been peculiar to the West. Some that he regards as important are doubtless not really vital to the essence of the gospel, although they may have been of unquestionable advantage to the progress of Christianity in its European or Anglo-Saxon environment. Unfortunate results in the way of denationalizing converts show that one race cannot afford to lay upon another the burden of unessential cultural accompaniments of its own faith.

On the other hand, a Christian church may become so Indian or so Chinese as to lead worshippers to forget the holy catholic church of which it is a part. It may so adjust to traditional culture as to dilute or lose completely its distinctively Christian features. While there must come to be a necessary immanence of the religion of Christ in each culture, the absolute transcendence of that religion to any given culture must be preserved. Christianity should penetrate such a culture to its very depths and should revivify it; but Christianity must not be allowed to shrink to the dimensions of that culture, becoming absorbed and particularized as a mere element in civilization. The author would be among the first to warn against the dangers in a policy of adaptation and to cite from history sad examples of mistakes. But in the wise and controlled application of this principle lies the hope for any extensive penetration of Christianity into the civilizations of Asia and Africa. A balance must be found wherein the church is truly Oriental or African and at the same time truly Christian. Hence a primary consideration centers about determining what is really essential in the Christianity which we share. This is not the place to discuss this problem; but the reader, remembering that Christians are as yet only a small nucleus among Oriental populations, should keep this issue in mind as these pages are read.

The main reason for study and experimentation in the adaptation of indigenous cultures to Christianity is the hope that an indigenous church may develop—a church that smacks of the soil, that grows naturally, that feels itself to be native and not exotic. The members of such a church are to be nationals “in their bones.” It need hardly be said that this has not been the result attained



by Western evangelism. Christianity all too often gives to non-Christian nationals of Oriental lands the impression of being a foreign affair. Universal truth has been needlessly clothed in Western vesture.

This is not surprising. Those who first introduced the new faith into non-Christian lands took with it, also, unessential Western accompaniments or externals of that faith. Western dress, Western salutations, Western names, Western organization, and exact translations of Western hymns, creeds and theologies inevitably gave a foreign aspect to Christianity. Especially in China and in India has the complaint been made that Christianity is still an alien religion. Converts should not be confronted with the task of assimilating Christianity through foreign media. Christian Indians, for example, should not have to become Christian Europeans, but truly the community of Christ in India. Much has been done since the World Missionary Conference of 1910 to rectify this impression of foreignness. But there is still enough of a basis for criticism to stimulate effort to eliminate any unnecessary alien aspect. Conscious and thoughtful attempts are being made to develop Christian fellowships that are thoroughly acclimatized, naturalized and domesticated.

In these pages attention centers about church architecture as illustrating this process of naturalizing Christianity in the various sections of the one world community of Christ. Giving consideration to local types of religious buildings is just one detail in a wider effort to avoid unnecessary breaks with a convert's past and to retain valid religious suggestions from the externals of his former faith. It includes the recognition that stupas, temples, mosques and pagodas have been enduring and influential elements in religious life and that the possibilities of their use should not be ignored. The issue of style in architecture is just a part of that more general problem of fostering a movement which will fully express the racial genius and cultural heritage of a given people and yet be faithful to the lessons of Christian history. No religion that is borrowed or is mechanically imitative can ever become powerful enough to change the stream of thought and life in a civilized nation.

In this matter of architecture we do not always stop to realize what a large part climate has played in determining style. In the tropics there is an effort to secure protection from the sun's glare and heat. Some conditions call for no windows, or for small windows placed very high in the wall, or for windows only on the north and south, or for windows deep set in the wall and protected from the vertical rays by wide eaves. Under the equator or on tropical coasts there will be need for cross-currents of air, and hence many-shuttered doors to admit

the monsoon wind. Obviously churches constructed with such intent would seem cold and gloomy in northern Europe.

On the other hand, the Gothic style represented an endeavor to get the maximum of light and sun for warmth in buildings. There is a French saying that "Gothic architecture was a struggle between light and darkness until the builders of the Sainte Chapelle in Paris built in light itself." A design was finally evolved which allowed the maximum proportion of window to wall-framing attainable with safety. If, as we are told, Gothic architecture never had a natural growth in Mediterranean countries, how much less would it thrive if transplanted to tropical latitudes.

Architecture must also be influenced by a people's conception of the function of a church, whether it be to glorify God, to provide a place for worship, to help the individual achieve a certain psychological state, or to give a setting for liturgical forms. Some churches are lecture halls emphasizing human responsibility rather than the availability of God. Others aim to minister through manifold social services. There is no clear agreement among evangelical Christians as to what the function of a church building should be. But whatever the structure erected for church uses in Asia or Africa, it carries implications regarding function; for buildings exert an intangible but ever present influence upon the nature of the activities that take place within their walls.

For reasons such as these one should rejoice that certain individuals and certain missions are searching for that type of building which will be adequate to the demands of Christian worship and service, but which will appear by its very outlines to belong to the people who will use it. They are encouraging the African Christian to build for himself a church that will be a source of spiritual satisfaction, first to himself and afterwards to the rest of the world. In China and Japan they are contrasting temples, where one court after another leads by degrees from the street to the holy ground of the inmost shrine, with the abrupt intrusion of Western-styled churches, which too often suggest a lecture hall rather than a place for religious reverence and quiet devotion. They are convinced that the Christian ideal would be served by abandoning the hybrid, unrefined and often ignoble architecture found in cosmopolitan and colonial cities, and by giving new expression to the historic art forms of a nation. With the increased dominance of nationalism there will almost certainly be a renaissance of interest in the national art heritage. Already in Peiping, in Nanking and in Canton new government buildings are being erected in Chinese style, ennobled by traditional line and ornament and yet quickened by a new spirit.



When one has become sensitive to the conception of an indigenous church, it may easily offend one's sense of fitness to see a Gothic structure obtruding in an environment graced by the cloistered quadrangles, the curving roofs and the columned porticoes of near-by palace or temple. Likewise to a person submerged in a native environment and intently bent on making every wise and possible adjustment so that Christianity may not unnecessarily repel, it is sometimes a shock to come suddenly upon a church which in its very structure symbolizes the foreignness of the faith that is being commended. The early Christians avoided such a result when they took over from pagan Rome the external forms of their churches. They did not refuse to do this for fear of confusing the style of a building with the doctrines professed in it. Just as the basilica and dome were adopted by the early church, so the Christian tradition may still be enriched by the gifts of every race it touches.

Even a rapid turning of these pages will indicate that efforts are being made to build "the glories and treasures of the nations" into the expressions of Christian worship and to exhibit the richness of diversity in the Christian world community. Compared with the world-wide expanse of Christianity, the amount of characteristically local Christian art is still relatively small. It is not the amount, however, that is significant; it is the trend.

It must be acknowledged that the rank and file of Asia's Christians are not interested in adapting indigenous architecture to Christian use. That intense conservatism which marks the East when once a habit has been formed causes even the majority of the clergy, whether in China, Japan or India, to cling with unshakable loyalty to the ecclesiastical forms bequeathed them by their Western fathers in the faith. Possibly one ought not to expect aggressive creative activity at this stage of the development of the Christian community. Many of its members are still inclined to assume that all indigenous art is pagan, and that all Western art is Christian. Certain interested Western representatives, therefore, take the initiative in producing model experiments in adaptation in order to overcome the initial attachment to alien forms to which second and third generation Christians have become accustomed. Conditions and arguments bearing on both sides will appear incidentally as we look at different specific efforts in the following pages. It will be noted that the problem varies from land to land.

Quite apart from the question whether indigenous art forms should be incorporated in provisions for Christian worship, it is hoped that the pictures which follow will stimulate attention to the esthetic element as an aid to wor-

ship. Anyone who has traveled extensively among the younger Christian churches is all too conscious that many of the church buildings are epitomes of mediocrity and ugliness. A recent inspection of church buildings in one advanced Eastern land showed that they were "rigidly plain, even crude in architectural design, often offensive to cultivated people." We hear much from interested observers of bare, gaunt buildings. The reasons for such conditions are, in part, legitimate. Most of the new adherents to Christianity have had small financial resources, and Western representatives with limited budgets have rightly invested funds from their supporting lands in evangelism, education and medical relief rather than in the erection of worthy church buildings. Then, too, theologically trained men can scarcely be expected to be architects.

But in so far as mediocre church buildings have resulted from indifference to that appropriateness and beauty which should be characteristic of Christian worship, a sore mistake has been made. Especially is this true in countries that have sturdy traditions and a fine feeling for art. It is unfortunate that often there are on building committees those who have little serious care for what a church looks like, as long as it adequately houses the congregation. By such persons anyone interested in art is classed as impractical. And yet assuredly people are influenced by what they see as well as by what they hear.

Unquestionably beauty has its perilous allurements, and some Protestants still shun it as indicating an unworthy trend toward Rome. Nevertheless, beauty has a ministry of its own; it lifts the individual to a closer relation to the Creator of all loveliness. Who can long remain insensitive to the silent uplift which comes from dignity and beauty in window, tower or chancel? Buildings and their adornment do express, and also tend to form, character. There may be honest disagreement over the most fitting architectural style for a given church in Asia, but surely there could be agreement that esthetic considerations should not be crassly neglected.

It is hoped, also, that this volume will contribute to catholicity, to that comprehensiveness, wideness and universality of view which that word connotes. At first the problem of church architecture might seem a simple one. But as the reader thinks with the people of many countries of the ways in which they have housed their Christian fellowships, he will sense the various problems in the different nations, climates and cultures and will gain an increment in sympathy and understanding.

This collection is manifestly merely suggestive rather than exhaustive. If churches in Europe and America have been almost completely omitted, it is be-



cause the narrow limits of this volume do not permit incorporating examples from more familiar fields. The purposes of this effort, moreover, are better served by an evident variety, even though limited, than by an exhaustive display.

At first sight these sketches may appear to deal only with architecture. But on almost every page will be found some hint of problems, or of cultural mind-sets, or of spiritual experiences, which will broaden one's appreciation of other peoples. Sometimes the story of a church takes one on a voyage through the centuries and the tracing of its style reveals an art migration over continents.

The author has taken up this study from the sheer delight in a fascinating problem. Just after college, as a traveler on the northwest frontier of India, he passed the church pictured on pages 67 and 68 and thought it to be a mosque. Ever since he secured at that time the two pictures reproduced here, the naturalization of Christianity in national homes of the spirit and the manifold expression of Christian experience as found in houses of God among many peoples have retained their interest for him. He has found that what appeared at first as a relatively simple matter of a critique of the use of brick and mortar has ramified into interesting aspects of the comparative study of religions and cultures.

## LIGHT THROUGH EGYPTIAN WINDOWS

A DISTINCT impression of the ecumenical character of Christianity is gained from noting the way in which the Church of Jesus the Light of the World was made possible in Old Cairo, Egypt. The appeal for funds was signed by bishops in England, Jerusalem, Egypt and the Sudan; and gifts came from Great Britain and Ireland, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Persia, Uganda, Kenya Colony, Cyprus, France, Switzerland, the Sudan and elsewhere. At the dedication of this church, built for and with the active help of an Old Cairo congregation, a Greek Orthodox archbishop and an Armenian Orthodox archimandrite were seated in the sanctuary beside the minister of the Church of Scotland. The agent of the Coptic patriarch was there and the abbess of the Coptic nunnery. Representatives came from nine denominations. A girls' choir sang in Arabic to a Gregorian chant. The congregation sang "Glorious things of thee are spoken," translated into Arabic by one of the guests, a Palestine priest of the diocese of Jerusalem.

In the dedicatory address the speaker, a bishop of the Church of England, said among other things: "This is a branch of the Anglican church. The same light lights us all, but here it shines through Egyptian windows. Christ must come to Egypt through Egyptians. . . . In our prayers today we pray that this church may be a lighthouse to shine out into the world."

With the exception of the red-tiled roof, the church is built of Egyptian materials. The walls are of warm, almost golden, stone. Here and there is an Egyptian colored glass window (tiny glass mosaics set in a design of plaster). In the sanctuary is a small block of green Iona marble from that little Scottish isle of saints and missionaries.

This church was built in memory of a devoted lover of Jesus Christ, the late Canon Temple Gairdner, one of Christ's true disciples, who for twenty-nine years had carried the light in Egypt by his life, words, music and writing, and by his great love for the Egyptian people. One cannot vision the reverence and solemnity of that international, interracial, interdenominational service, with its expressions of love from hundreds of persons in nineteen countries, without gaining a fresh and impressive content for that phrase—the holy catholic church.



THE CHURCH OF JESUS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD,  
OLD CAIRO, EGYPT



## A STOREHOUSE OF PRIMITIVE CHRISTIAN RITES

THE fact is sometimes forgotten that North Africa, through the church of Alexandria, produced some of the greatest of early Christian leaders, who profoundly influenced the formulations of Christian doctrine. During the first five centuries of the Christian era a vast number of churches sprang up in that area. Subsequent centuries, however, were marked by internal religious strife and by severe persecutions and humiliating restrictions on the part of Moslems, so that many of these Coptic churches disappeared. From the seventh century until the British occupation of Egypt, the Coptic churches were isolated from the rest of Christendom. We turn to them today as ancient survivals of primitive Christian rites and ceremonies.

The Coptic-Byzantine type of architecture, indigenous in Egypt long before Moslems introduced the Saracenic, has in general been preserved by the Coptic churches. In these churches the women are separated from the men, sometimes by a partition with a latticed screen, sometimes by reserving for them a balcony with latticework so heavy that it prevents anyone's seeing them. In the front of the church there is a solid screen which is often elaborate, inlaid with ivory figures of the cross and other geometric designs. This screen separates the main body of the church from the holy of holies where the mass is said by the priest and where the communion is administered.

The evangelical churches of Egypt are, as a rule, not very large and are very simply built. Most Protestant congregations have discarded the Coptic-Byzantine structure in favor of the simple, unadorned type of Western "meeting house." This does away with the cruciform building, the chancel, the altar and the holy place. The services are as simple as the building. An entire break has been made with Coptic symbolism. Although most Westerners see tawdriness in Coptic churches and lengthiness in Coptic ritual, there are, on the other hand, missionaries who feel that too much of what is distinctively Coptic has been discarded.



INTERIOR OF A COPTIC CHURCH

## FROM DAMASCUS TO ALASKA



As one enters the harbor of Sitka, the old capital of Alaska, one sees, unobstructed by any other building, one of the most interesting remnants of Russia's early expansion eastward across Asia and on to the coast of North America. It is the severely white and plain building of the Russian Church. The chimes of silvery bells were brought from Moscow by hardy explorers, and the church itself was under the special protection of the czar who, with other members of the imperial family, sent many costly furnishings and ornaments. As in other Russian churches there are no seats; the congregation stands or kneels during the entire service. Twelve ikons, or images, in costly silver and gold casings, ar-



tistically chased, adorn the sanctuary, which is separated by a screen from the body of the church according to Russian custom. Many of the other ikons were presented by the survivors of vessels wrecked on that grim coast.

After scanning hundreds of miles of snowclad mountain ranges and visiting simple Indian villages emblazoned with totem poles, one is almost startled by this strange steeple and this bulbous dome. It still more expands one's conception of the catholicity of Christianity to reflect on the thousands of miles that separate this dome from its place of origin as an artistic conception, and on the hundreds of years that have passed since its first appearance.

The introduction of this architectural form into Russia is attributed to Tamerlane, who came like a whirlwind out of high Asia, terrorizing East and West. It is said that he saw its prototype in the doomed city of Damascus and had drawings made of it before the city was sacked. Subsequently, in Samarkand, buildings with the swelling, dome-shaped tower were erected by the Tartan conqueror in honor of Aljai, the woman he loved better than anyone else on earth. From Samarkand this design went to Russia to become the dominant motif in the decoration of Russian churches. When a new world began to open up, Russian settlers naturally built their churches on lines that had been associated with Christian worship as they knew it.



THE RUSSIAN CHURCH, SITKA

## AMONG THE SCATTERED ISLANDS OF THE PACIFIC

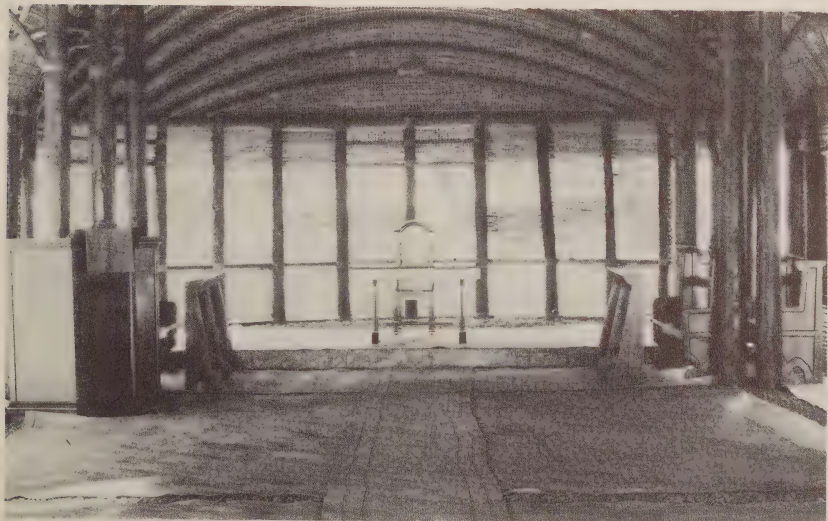
IN Samoa, within view of the sea beyond white waves breaking on coral reefs, and in the shadow of Vaea Hill, where sleeps Robert Louis Stevenson in his grave "under the wide and starry sky," is the new chapel of the Papauta Girls' School (London Missionary Society). A famous Samoan carpenter, Iuma by name, with fifty of his men undertook the work, although never before had a Samoan building been made with transepts. The girls planted sugar cane and twisted its leaves on wild bamboo for the eight thousand pieces of thatch on the roof. From beaten coconut husks they plaited nearly fifteen miles of sinnet, a kind of string, out of the twenty-eight miles of sinnet used to tie together the beams of the building—for there are no nails in a Samoan building. Two hundred boys from a neighboring school volunteered to bring in the heavy stones and soil for the foundation of the floor, on which was placed a thick layer of much admired gray pebbles from the beach nine miles away. The inner posts are the trunks of breadfruit trees, the hundred outer ones are tree ferns, and the cross beams are coconut logs. To stain the woodwork a varnish was made of the bark of the mangrove darkened with lampblack from the candlenut. The girls bound wild coconut with string to make the latticework and blinds.

Thus, in 1935, a dream which the teachers and missionaries had held for years came to reality—a church in which only Samoan materials and workmanship would be used. Certainly young Christians who can rise to an occasion with such gallant spirits are an asset to the world. The congregation was surprised at the beauty of this building and they love to worship in it.

This church in Samoa is only one out of the many in the scattered island groups of the Pacific. The world-wide Christian fellowship includes groups in Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia. It is thrilling to know that the churches in the Society Islands are entirely self-supporting; that the Christians in the Cook and the Samoan Islands bear not only the whole expenses of their churches, but also contribute missionaries of their own race to other parts of Polynesia; and that in 1930 church members in the Gilbert Islands gave three dollars a member to their church. Statistically such items are trifling; not so their significance as evidence of growth.



CHAPEL OF THE PAPAUTA GIRLS' SCHOOL, SAMOA



INTERIOR OF CHAPEL, PAPAUTA



## FOLLOWING THE TRAIL OF SPAIN

SOME four hundred years ago Spaniards entered the Philippines. There was no indigenous architecture other than dwellings of bamboo and nipa palm. Hence, the priests adapted the ecclesiastical architecture of Spain to the available materials and to the requirements of a tropical climate. Americans, since their occupation of the Philippines in 1898, have introduced concrete, corrugated iron, and lumber impregnated against the inroads of white ants.

The accompanying picture shows the Cathedral of St. Mary and St. John (Protestant Episcopal), Manila, completed in 1907 as one of Bishop C. H. Brent's earliest projects.

As a Westerner enters a typical Filipino evangelical church in a village or small town, his eye catches certain adornments—the artificial flowers, the lace borders, the large paintings by local artists, and certain types of wooden screens placed near the altar or the entrance to the building—which show its distinctive character.



THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. MARY AND ST. JOHN, MANILA

## CULTURAL VARIETY IN A SINGLE CITY

CAPTAIN COOK, the great English explorer, discovered the Hawaiian Islands in 1778. He found a kind-hearted, tolerant, lovable people whose most characteristic contribution to present-day Hawaii is the spirit of *aloha*—a word which means love, friendship, good will, how do you do or good-by, as occasion demands.

A richly varied flood of immigration, which gives Hawaii distinctive significance, began roughly one hundred years after its discovery, and since 1900 has made that island "an ethnological museum and a sociological laboratory." Japanese form by far the largest group. In decreasing order come Filipinos, Portuguese, Chinese, Hawaiians, Puerto Ricans, Koreans and Spaniards. The majority of Hawaii's population comes from racial cultures older than those of the North American mainland, and acknowledges no inferiority.

Concentrated in this small group of islands are different languages, religions, family systems and cultural traits—each race tending to retain many of its own memories, traditions and interests even while sympathetically yielding to an active process of Americanization. Hawaii's geographical position adds to its interest. Located two thousand miles from the American shore, it has been well called the crossroads of the Pacific.

Many of the racial and cultural groups in Hawaii have their separate Christian congregations. Perhaps in no other single city does one get so clearly and in such small space the impression that each cultural tradition loves to retain its own form of expression when erecting a Christian church. The next five pictures illustrate this variety.

## AMERICAN INFLUENCE IN THE PACIFIC

FOR forty years after Captain Cook's discovery of Hawaii contact with sailors and traders brought to the Hawaiians new diseases, weapons and a shattering of the native religion. Those were years of marked moral disintegration. Only the vaguest impressions from these islands reached Americans of those days, for Hawaii was then as remote from the currents of human progress as the most distant Pacific island is today.

There is a story of a Hawaiian lad, Opukahaia, who in 1809 swam out to an American whaler, stowed away, and finally reached New Haven. One day he was found sitting on the doorsteps of Yale College crying because there was no one to teach his people. Even though missions to distant people was a romantic idea to most people at that time, there were those who eventually made this lad's interest bear fruit. For in 1819, fourteen missionaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions set sail to serve Hawaiians—a practically unknown and supposedly barbarous people in one of the obscure corners of the earth.

During the next forty years (1820-1860) occurred "one of the most remarkable transformations of a people under the educational influence of noble teachers and Christian ideals which the world has ever witnessed." The missionaries reduced the language to writing, started schools, introduced manual training, engaged in social service and evangelized the people. By 1860 their task seemed to some to be complete, so in 1864 the missionaries were practically withdrawn—a step which history has adjudged a mistake in view of the reaction and turmoil which followed.

The accompanying picture shows the Central Union Church, erected in 1924 as the principal church for all worshipers desiring services in English. It is called, also, the Church-in-a-Garden, because it is surrounded by a beautiful eight and one-half acre garden. Its substantial, uncompromising New England spire seems to symbolize for today the early Puritan influence which stood so strongly for Sabbath observance, for sex morality, and for the regulation of conduct by law.





CENTRAL UNION CHURCH, HONOLULU

## THE WESTMINSTER ABBEY OF HAWAII

THE early missionaries to Hawaii reared at first no model churches beyond Hawaiian ideas and ability, but encouraged chiefs and people to erect grass houses of the rudest form for their worship. With progress in civilization came the disposition on the part of the people to build larger churches of wood and coral. One of the largest of these structures built by and for native Hawaiian Christians is the Kawaiahao Church, erected in 1842 and still regularly used. It is shown in the accompanying picture.

Toward the cost of this church the Hawaiian king gave liberally in money, and his subjects in labor. Each of five different groups worked one day a week bringing blocks of stone on their backs from a distant coral reef. It was the king who at the dedication presented the deed to the church officers. Hawaiians claim that the Kawaiahao Church is the only church in America where kings have regularly worshiped and whose churchyard contains the tomb of a king (King Lunalilo). A bronze tablet perpetuates the memory of the benevolent Queen Kaahumanu, a convert to Christianity.



KAWAIAHAO CHURCH, HONOLULU



## THE CHURCH OF THE CROSSROADS

SINCE 1923 the Church of the Crossroads has attempted to shepherd the young people of Honolulu's many cultural groups. The spirit of the church is indicated by one of the prayers often used: "O God, make the door of this house we have raised to thee wide enough to receive all who need human love and fellowship, and a heavenly Father's care; and narrow enough to shut out all envy, pride and hate."

Those who designed the new church building (erected in 1936) intended that it should symbolize the blending of cultures actually in process in the congregation. Hence there are intentional suggestions of Polynesian, Chinese and Japanese motifs. There is wood from the Philippines and from Samoa. There is color—surmounting all, a gilded cross; a brilliant blue roof; walls of white plaster on cement blocks; floors inside consisting of blocks in blue and red; grilles over the main door lined with brilliant blue raw silk; and a proposed loggia carrying along the red pillars and beams, thus accentuating the Chinese feeling which is already strongly suggested. Recognition of the fact that this church is located in Hawaii is found in the entrance doors of monkey pod, in the columns with bas-reliefs of hala trees, and in the patterns of ā-pé leaf and banana plant used in decoration.

To symbolize the variety in cultural heritage of the members of this church the chancel shows carvings representing four great religious traditions—the flaming aureole of Zoroastrianism; the praying hands of Judaism; the bo tree of Buddhism; and the lotus of Hinduism. These lead up to the cross upon the altar which through special lighting arrangements is brought into prominence.





THE CHURCH OF THE CROSSROADS, HONOLULU

## THE CASTLE-CHURCH OF HONOLULU

THE Makiki Christian Church of Honolulu (Congregational) was organized by Japanese in 1904. The work first started near a Japanese camp in a little shed accommodating only thirty-six persons. Within a year the shed became too small, so a cottage was rented accommodating eighty persons. By the end of the next year expanding activities necessitated a still larger church. On the tenth anniversary the membership had reached the mark of five hundred and the church became self-supporting.

On the twenty-fifth anniversary, when the congregation had increased to almost eight hundred, the members laid plans for the present building, shown in the accompanying picture. The style is that of an old feudal castle in Japan. Architect, contractor and painter of interior pictures were all Japanese.

One assigned reason for the choice of this type of architecture takes us back to that early Roman Catholic effort to evangelize Japan, preceding by some three hundred years any Protestant approach. It was in 1549 that Francis Xavier landed in Japan and began a work that grew to large proportions in a few years. In 1560 Lord Hisahide, a Christian samurai, built a tower five stories high and called it "Place to Worship the Lord of Heaven." Since the pastor of the Makiki Church believes that a Japanese castle was thus first used as a place to worship the Christian God, he is happy to have his church in Honolulu recall the intimate relationship of castle architecture with Christianity. He associates this style, also, with the fact that biblical writers used a fortress or high tower as a symbol of God's protecting care.

Another reason given by the Japanese Congregationalists of Hawaii for their choice of style was their desire to make a definite contribution to the Christianization of the architectural beauty of Japan. Two golden dolphins instead of a cross adorn either end of the topmost ridge-pole. The dolphin has association with Eastern architecture; but since the fish is an ancient symbol of Christ, a Christian interpretation has been given to this feature.





MAKIKI CHRISTIAN CHURCH (JAPANESE), HONOLULU

## PAYING TRIBUTE TO A MOTHER CULTURE

MANY persons unhesitatingly place the First Church of Christ (Chinese) among the beautiful churches of Honolulu. Surely we can enter into the feeling of these Congregational Chinese Christians who, though American citizens, manifestly wished to pay tribute to their mother culture by worshiping in a building reminiscent of China's traditional architecture. May not one function of a church in Hawaii be to symbolize in stone the blending of Eastern and Western feeling? The accompanying picture—the fifth illustrating cultural variety in a single city—gives one view of this church.

There are, however, certain nationals in China and Japan who understand their own architectural standards, who are familiar with excellent embodiments of their classic styles and who shrink from seeing these established forms warped into hybrid types. There is a studied proportion, for example, in the various elements of Chinese architecture. Columns, beams, lintels, cornices, roof finials and heights of ridge-poles reveal a subtle sense of proportion. Many of the efforts to adapt an indigenous style to a Christian church have not been altogether successful and have been severely criticized. Dire results may easily come from tampering unintelligently with classic styles, and unfortunately there are as yet relatively few architects qualified to make artistically acceptable adaptations. In the meantime, one school of interested Westerners think that their own initiative can best be employed in introducing from their respective countries the finest types of religious architecture—that which has acquired a Christian stamp through long use—as their most appropriate gift to the younger Christian churches to which they have gone.

Highly significant adaptations, however, have been made by the few professionally qualified architects sent out by certain mission boards. These may serve to stimulate native practitioners who not only have a feeling for their own styles but also a knowledge of the demands of Christian worship. Anything that helps this consummation ought to be welcomed, for indigenous architecture will be satisfactorily adapted to Christian purposes only when Christianity has so far spread in any land as to influence and inspire the architectural genius of that country.



THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST (CHINESE), HONOLULU



## SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF CHINESE ARCHITECTURE

THE buildings in the Forbidden City of Peiping have been appraised by a noted architect as the most stately and splendid group in all the world. Certain it is that the architecture developed by the Chinese has an exquisite charm—both distinguished and distinctive. It embodies elements of beauty which are less emphasized in the West but which it is not difficult for all to learn to appreciate.

In the first place, Chinese taste requires a certain elaborate and orderly setting for a noble structure. A typical temple must be approached gradually by a crescendo of gates, flights of steps, terraces, courtyards and accessory edifices that converge toward the main temple, the climax of the whole structure. The buildings grow in importance as one passes through wide-open portals from one courtyard to another. At last the temple proper looms before one's gaze. Thus the family or group psychology of the Chinese finds expression in architecture, in contrast to the individualism of the West, which concentrates attention on a single building.

Immemorial tradition demands that the central line of symmetry about which the temple grounds arrange themselves, marked by the succession of gateways, be always directed toward the south. The marked predilection of the Chinese for a southern exposure is evidenced in the fact that houses, palaces, yamens and even towns have their axes directed toward the sun in the meridian. In accord with this feeling for the maximum southern exposure, a Chinese temple is placed at right angles to the central axis, so that its façade is on the long side of the building in contrast to the façade of a Western church, which is usually on the short side or gable end. Thus in China one enters, not the end, but the side, of a building which is used for worship. Hence concentration on the mere imitation of gorgeous architectural detail may not create a Chinese atmosphere; the whole arrangement must be considered. It is interesting that the recently discovered ruins of the oldest known Christian church structure in China, built by Franciscan friars in 1383, reveal not only Chinese details in roof eaves but also a Chinese grouping of all the monastery buildings.

To the Western eye an intriguing feature of Chinese architecture is the roof, with its flowing lines. It is as though a canopy of heavy texture had fallen into sweeping curves, or yielding bamboo rafters had suggested these characteris-

tic lines. Nowhere in the world have builders so realized the splendid possibilities of the roof. Here a roof combines beauty with protection from sun and rain without undue obscuring of light. So striking is this feature, in contrast to the Western subordination of roof by means of cornices and parapets, that some imitators of Chinese architecture have thought of the roof as its only essential factor.

Another feature of Chinese architecture is the lavish use of color. Roof tiles shine in quiet gray, vibrant blue, jade green or imperial yellow. Columns, beams and lintels glow in rich deep red, walls in warm soft yellow. Inscriptions, the calligraphy of which is almost revered, are in gold. There is color everywhere, within and without a Chinese temple or palace.

In much of Western architecture the essential supporting elements are concealed; but the Chinese frankly expose to view the entire wooden structure of pillars, architraves, beams, rafters and consoles. There is an impression of strength and dignity as one looks from below at the massive timbering of a Chinese roof. Structurally the walls are merely screens between the pillars, whose rich contrasting color frankly acknowledges that they are what carry the heavy roof.

The West tends also to conceal or to minimize the foundation; but in Chinese architecture the foundation platform or low terrace on which the temple rests is an important feature, being doubled or trebled in an important building. An open balustrade usually runs around this raised foundation.

Gothic architecture emphasizes the vertical and the aspiring. Chinese buildings are relatively low, and horizontal lines are emphasized. Some think that this unconsciously betokens the attachment the Chinese feel for Mother Earth, "the Earth that they venerate, love and embrace; the Earth whose affirmation of life they seek to emulate." The faces of certain Chinese college girls beamed when it was suggested that their characteristically horizontal architecture could express "the wideness of God's mercy," just as the high spires and pointed arches of the Gothic symbolize a reaching up to God.

The apostolic delegate to China has definitely placed the problem of architecture among those cultural problems which face the Christian church in China. One authority, specializing officially in ecclesiastical architecture for the Roman Catholic church in China, believes that no form of Western structure does more violence to that mute language of the soul of China which we call Chinese architecture than its most complete antithesis—the Gothic of northern Europe. He holds that if Christianity is to be at home in China it must not be lodged in buildings of Western pattern, totally at variance with the Chinese temperament, climate and landscape. The Catholic University of Peiping attempts by means of

both architecture and curriculum "to offer visible proof, as it opens its doors to the youth of China, that its mission is to idealize and purify what is already dear to them and not to deaden their taste for the culture of their native land by over-emphasizing that of other countries."

Several Protestant denominations have maintained their own architects in China. Many individual Protestant missionaries, also, have given creative thought to the development of a Chinese architecture for the Chinese church and for Christian institutions. The Peiping Union Medical College, at no little additional cost, sought to combine in its exceptionally noteworthy buildings the Western utility of interior with the beauty in line and decoration of the Chinese exterior, particularly as regards height, roof structure and ornamentation. "This we have done in order that the Chinese people may feel at home in these buildings and be drawn into the closest sympathy and cooperation with the work they house, and also as a sincere expression of an appreciation of the best in Chinese architecture."

Another way of enabling Chinese Christians to feel at home in their churches is by the use of their written characters in decoration. The Chinese character is a word picture in itself, with perspective and richness of association that far surpass those of our Roman letters. As a nation, therefore, the Chinese manifest an almost religious veneration for the brush strokes of their ancient graphic art.

Such writing can be seen in many Christian churches in China. When a well known calligrapher had written out a certain memorial inscription for the Cathedral of Our Savior in Peiping, the stone-cutters were besieged by neighbors who knew nothing of Christianity but were asking for permission to take rubbings of the beautiful characters on the marble. On either side of the chancel in St. Matthew's Church, Nanchang, hang scroll-boards showing gold characters on a black lacquer background. The beautifully fashioned phrases read: "The gospel awakens the dreams of a thousand autumns," and "The heavenly teaching is able to make anew ten thousand nations." The writing for these scrolls was done by one of the foremost scholars of China.

Christian missions are sometimes accused of being a denationalizing influence. An interesting commentary on this is the fact that they have been leaders in preserving the architectural beauty of China's great past. The pictures which follow show how the characteristics of Chinese architecture have, in varying degrees, been embodied in places for Christian worship, producing an atmosphere at once both Christian and Chinese.



## ST. ANDREW'S, WUCHANG



ST. ANDREW'S, WUCHANG

If one were to pass through the narrow streets of the ancient city of Wuchang to one of the gates that pierce the city's massive walls, one would find, a few minutes' ride outside, a group of modern factory buildings. It was to serve this industrial community that St. Andrew's Church (Protestant Episcopal) was built. Alongside the church is a parish house with club and recreational facilities.

Instead of Chinese bells at the corners of the eaves, there are slender crosses of white brass swinging in the breeze. At the up-turn of the roof is a phoenix—used not only because the figure can be bought locally at small cost, but also because Chinese legend associates the phoenix with the concept of the resurrection. Several of the characteristics of Chinese architecture enumerated in the previous section are found in this picture.

## THE DREAM OF AN ANNAMITE PRIEST



THE CATHEDRAL AT PHAT-DIEM, INDO-CHINA

MOST Protestants are quite unaware of the antiquity of Christian missions in the Far East. Very likely they think of the beginning as 1807, when Protestant missions began in China with the arrival of Robert Morrison. Yet the Holy See created the Archdiocese of Peking as early as 1303. The Roman Catholic church made considerable progress throughout the Annamite Empire (Indo-China) during the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. When Morrison was making his first convert the Roman Catholic church had in Indo-China four bishops, two hundred and five priests, a thousand catechists, and fifteen hundred nuns. There must have been several hundred thousand Roman Catholics in this relatively small country at that time, all possessing a thoroughly Catholic tradition and spirit.

It was in this land that Father Six, a native priest, with tireless devotion, energy and genius, produced the cathedral at Phat-Diem, begun in 1888. He had passed through the decades of intense persecution by the Annamite civil

authorities, during which it is estimated that a hundred thousand Christians were martyred. After imprisonment and exile Father Six was made pastor of a desolate and impoverished Christian community on the delta of the Red River at Phat-Diem. He had already conceived the idea that the church would assume far greater dignity in the eyes of the people if it possessed an outward manifestation equal in splendor to the great buildings erected under pagan auspices. Consequently the cathedral was designed in the form pictured on the opposite page.

Almost insurmountable difficulties had to be overcome. To get a secure foundation he had to drive great quantities of bamboo piles into the deltaic silt. On top of these he placed massive frames of wood, which in turn were to support gravel and other suitable surface material. Near by were no building materials adequate for such a monumental structure as he had planned. Therefore iron-wood columns thirty feet long were suspended on either side of junks (since this wood is heavier than water) and brought from a distance of ninety miles. By other expedients blocks of stone weighing many tons were brought from a greater distance. In order to manipulate such tremendously heavy and awkward materials on the site, Father Six filled his building with earth, and piled earth up around it as it went up. When all was completed this earth had to be removed from the inside and from around the structure.

An article in a quarterly devoted to the arts of the Roman Catholic church (*Liturgical Arts*), after describing this monument of Annamite Christian architecture, concludes, "If it was possible, immediately following a period of bloody and savage persecution, for a native Annamite priest to construct so fine an example of a Christian church built in native style, and this without any kind of assistance from abroad, surely it should be possible to do likewise, not only in other parts of the Far East, but all over the world where a native style exists. And there is perhaps even a further moral in that we find here a justification for trying to build ourselves in the spirit of our own time and our own place."



## A CHINESE PRAYER AND MEDITATION HALL

IN a secluded corner of the campus of the University of Nanking is the Twinem Memorial Prayer Hall, never closed day or night. To Chinese a temple connotes individual worship rather than congregational assembly or classes for the study of a sacred book. This chapel is, therefore, devoted exclusively to prayer, meditation and individual interviews. This is especially appropriate, for the one to whom the chapel is dedicated had on his heart the winning of individual students to Jesus Christ.

It was the conviction of the donors that a house of God should be expressed in the architectural language of the people who would use it. All the outside is temple red. Instead of the usual dragon, at the gable ends of the roof is carved a fish—the early Christian symbol for Jesus Christ. In the wooden lattices of each of the translucent windows, which simulate the paper windows of the temples, is the outline of a cross. On the altar, also, is a small bronze cross. The eight-sided Chinese lamps bear biblical phrases regarding light. Both inside and on the exterior a frequently used motif is the cross rising out of the lotus—signifying that Buddhism must find its complete fulfilment in the cross of Christ. In particular, this design is carved on the “spirit way”—the inclined panel to be seen in the picture between the two sets of steps up to the entrance—an architectural feature on which, in Chinese buildings of importance, are found exquisitely delicate and beautiful carvings of clouds, waves, birds and dragons in low relief.

The whole conception of this Chinese prayer hall so interested the students that they donated a bronze temple bell for the separate belfry shown at the extreme right of the picture on the opposite page. The students feel that this prayer hall is theirs, they take a pride in it, and desire to have their weddings and baptisms here. Just because it is a place given up to quietness and reverence, it is able to play a vital part in their prayer life.



TWINEM MEMORIAL PRAYER HALL, NANKING

## A CHINESE CHURCH INTERIOR

THE Presbyterian church at Nanhsuchow is a beautiful example of Chinese architecture, within and without, in line and in decoration. The interior is like some of the Peiping temples with their brilliant red-lacquered columns and gray brick walls. The ceiling is made up of square panels painted with white herons on a green background, and is bordered with red and yellow—for the Chinese can combine the most daring colors in ways that would not occur to a Westerner. On the beams there are Chinese carvings painted in gold, blue and green. On the main beam over the chancel are three scenes from the life of Christ—the birth, the crucifixion and the resurrection. The perforated carved panels above this beam on either side represent the bamboo and apricot with their symbolic meanings. The small lower beams to right and left show the Last Supper and the triumphal entry respectively.

In the panel on the wall at the back of the chancel is a large golden cross. Three ceremonial Chinese “boards” are to be seen above and on either side of this panel. They are in gold lettering on a deep blue background and this again is edged with gold. The one above reads when translated, “Holy truth has spread gloriously.” Those on either side each bear a couplet from Kang Hsi and read, “The great true Ruler of the universe eternally shows forth his being and truth,” and “The Just One has spread his love and righteousness, and has perfectly shown forth his salvation.”

Christian worship at Nanhsuchow began in a temple kindly loaned by Chinese friends—a temple of the war god. This was followed by a little gray brick church which gave way, in 1925, to the present building. The idea back of this new church was to interpret Christian truth through Chinese art and construction. The builders realize that the ideal is far from having been reached. But they hope that this church points toward the goal which the Chinese church itself will reach—a distinctive Chinese ecclesiastical architecture.



INTERIOR OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, NANHSUCHOW





## A PRAYER GARDEN

OFTEN within a typical temple enclosure in China one finds beautiful old trees, the lines of whose graceful branches contrast pleasingly with the stiff rows of pillars of the surrounding colonnades. The Chinese display delicate sentiment in harmonizing the construction of their sanctuaries with the natural surroundings, so that the edifice seems to be an integral part of the landscape. In the Christian prayer garden pictured here an attempt has been made to create something of that atmosphere of cloistered quiet and meditation which so much appeals to the Chinese.

The Japanese, also, are peculiarly sensitive to the appeal of natural beauty. They are more at home with nature than are Westerners and are more sensitive to trees, flowers, springs and hills. Deep-lying emotions have been given free expression in the laying out of gardens and in glorifying the beauties of nature. Buddhism and Shinto wisely use trees, flowers, mountains and exquisite landscapes as recognized aids in inspiring reverence, and have chosen the most beautiful natural settings for places of worship.

We find a somewhat different motive at work among Iranians in the Near East. Adjoining an Anglican church in Shiraz is a garden with tall planes, poplars, fruit trees and flower beds. In one corner is the church guest house, always open. Village Christians may use this house whenever they wish. The cottage is simply furnished, and the guests here find lodging, cooking their own food and otherwise taking care of themselves. A Moslem wanderer can always enter a mosque if he needs shelter, and in some of the shrine towns there are hostels for pilgrims. In the same way this church wishes to be a home to any Christian coming to the city. The architecture has been kept Persian so that in style and spirit the congregation may feel that the place is theirs.

## IN DEFERENCE TO BUDDHIST ENVIRONMENT

HALF hidden among groves of giant cryptomerias and oaks stand the ancient temples of Nara, Japan, where shrines and trees have grown old together. Daily the great bell of Nara calls the townspeople and the thronging pilgrims to worship in one or another of her celebrated and majestic temples.

At the southern edge of this Nara park until 1930 stood a little shabby wooden building, a mere whitewashed shell which shook as people entered—the home of a Christian congregation. There were those who felt deep humiliation that such a rude structure should represent Christianity in that ancient and sacred city where it was surrounded by beautiful examples of Japanese architecture. A worthy Gothic structure was therefore contemplated.

The authorities of Nara, however, forbade the erection of a new building whose style of architecture would destroy the jealously preserved harmony in style of their Buddhist temples. Responsible Episcopalian missionaries believed it was possible to erect a church, combining American experience with Japanese skill, and symbolizing a faith which could gather up into itself much that was pure and noble in what had gone before. The accompanying picture shows the new building for Christ Church (Episcopal), completed in 1930 only after faithful and persevering prayer continued in the face of many bitter disappointments.

The lines of the roof of the new church are distinctly Japanese and use tiles for which Nara is justly famous. The cedars which form the pillars and roof beams come from near-by mountains. This wood is remarkably firm, close-grained and fragrant, and has a deep meaning to the Christian community of the city. The exterior is reinforced concrete, with a cross surmounting the roof. The altar rails curve upward and the lectern is shaped like a Japanese roof to symbolize the proclaiming of the gospel from the rooftops.

The building was initiated with a Japanese ceremony which consecrated the whole foundation—not merely its cornerstone. At the dedication men and women, boys and girls, and little children mounted the high, narrow stone steps which led to the church terrace. The trowel was passed in turn to each member of the congregation, including even the smallest children. At the end tea and round pink and white cakes were passed amid general congratulations.



CHRIST CHURCH, NARA



## THE SAVIOR OF JAPAN ALSO

IN the town of Hikone, in Japan, on the shores of Lake Biwa, is a small chapel designed with the conscious purpose of helping Japanese to realize that Christ is not the Savior of Europe only but of Asia as well. The Smith Memorial Chapel of Grace Church (Episcopal), erected in 1932, has the curved roof of a Japanese temple and each of the rafters is tipped with the gold-leaved metal cap which such architecture requires. The whole building is of white arbor vitæ, which is used in religious structures in Japan and creates for the Japanese a serene and worshipful atmosphere. Not a single knot mars the smooth whiteness of the wood. No drop of paint or stain has been used. The railing of the narrow porch which surrounds the chapel is similar to that in most Japanese temples and shrines. The communion rail uses the same characteristic pattern. Around the chapel is a beautiful garden such as Buddhists and Shintoists love to have around their temples.

The soft effect from translucent paper in Japanese windows is simulated by the use of the more durable ground glass, set in frames copied from a temple of the Zen sect. The altar stands in a small alcove like that found housing the holiest spot in a Japanese house. The credence table is of a form used in temples for the reception of offerings. The four lower panels in the front door represent the pine, the chrysanthemum, the bamboo and the plum, with their symbolic meanings.

The Christian character of the edifice is evident from the large cross which surmounts the peak of the roof and the smaller one above the entrance. On each end-tile of the roof is a cross. In those places where the ordinary temple has carving there are Christian symbols—the grapevine, the dove, the crown or the cross.

This chapel cost twice as much as one of concrete, and four times as much as one of ordinary wood. But the American missionary who designed the chapel and presides over it, noting how his congregation prefer even the cold chapel to the warmer parish house, and how non-Christians bow or say a prayer as they pass, feels that the cost has been abundantly justified.



SMITH MEMORIAL CHAPEL, HIKONE



CHAPEL OF ST. PIERRE AND ST. PAUL (ROMAN CATHOLIC), NARA

## JAPANESE REACTIONS

A JAPANESE visitor to the Episcopal chapel at Kumamoto was heard to exclaim, "A real Japanese church! I feel my soul expand." A non-Christian gentleman, after seeing the Episcopal church at Nara, asked for something he could read which would tell him about Christianity. "I am not a Christian, nor have I been interested. But today, while walking about the park, I came upon your church. That is something I do understand. Now I want to know more about Christianity." Many such testimonies from non-Christians in India, China and Japan could be given.

The movement, however, toward indigenous architecture for churches in Japan is very feeble and hesitant. Foreign architecture for buildings of all sorts has become so common that to most Japanese a foreign style seems quite natural for churches also. Reinforced concrete is able to withstand earthquakes better than the wooden architecture of old Japan. Moreover, Japanese Christians do not wish to be reminded of their religious past. A Western building helps to symbolize the fact that Christianity is different. At this stage they would rather run the risk of becoming too Western in their church architecture than to incur the danger of continued and possibly dangerous entanglement with Buddhism and Shinto through the use of symbols, ritual and architecture adapted from these religions. Hence, the few examples of an adapted style owe their being to the keenness and initiative of foreign enthusiasts rather than to local feeling. Almost no Japanese pastor and few laymen can be found who, as yet, covet for Christian use the types of beauty seen in Buddhist and Shinto temples.

Impossible as it now seems to most Japanese Christians to disassociate such beauty from non-Christian connections, yet it may be that, after several generations have come and gone, an expression of Christianity in Japan may evolve which shall be neither Western nor a slavish copy of old Japan. This will come when the artistic genius of Japan, free and fearless, dedicates itself to bodying forth what God has spoken to Japan.



## A TWO HUNDRED DOLLAR CHAPEL

THE Sherman Memorial Girls' High School, at Chittoor, South India, under the American Arcot Mission, has a chapel noteworthy for its simplicity and its Indian atmosphere. The idea started with the school alumnæ, aided by their American teachers; and because those who initiated the plan were eager for action they decided to build a very simple structure. All expenses of the building were met by friends and graduates, as are all repairs and improvements—never by mission funds. This simple building cost only four hundred and fifty rupees, or about two hundred dollars.

The chapel stands in a mango grove, close to the school building, and is approached by two paths bordered with flowering plants which are kept watered by the girls. The raised platform, edged with stone but otherwise covered with sand (this in lieu of more expensive stone slabs), sustains pillars of local granite carved in the Dravidian style. It is hoped that the thatched roof may sometime be



CHAPEL OF SHERMAN MEMORIAL GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL, CHITTOOR

displaced by a terraced roof of stone. The sides are open except for beautiful creepers which climb the lattice. This lattice had been temporarily removed at the time the picture was taken in order that the roof might be rethatched.

The worshipers sit on mats, those wearing shoes removing them at the door. Behind the front platform, on which a leader often sits cross-legged after the manner of the Indian religious teacher, is a wall to serve as background. A cross, of country teakwood, is in a recess in the wall with a simple country lamp behind its center to light up the recess. On either side in triangular recesses in the wall are Indian lamps of traditional patterns. There is a small bookshelf full of devotional literature for those who come to this *mandapam* for private prayer and meditation. No announcements are ever made and no matters of school discipline are ever mentioned in this prayer hall; it is always kept quiet as a place of worship. Hence it has an atmosphere of reverence. Accompanying the singing by the girls and while they are having a period of silence, bird songs are often heard. This simple building has brought a great deal of inspiration into the life of the school.



INTERIOR OF CHAPEL, CHITTOOR



THE CHAPEL OF THE SOCIAL CENTER FOR WOMEN, VELLORE

## A CHRISTIAN PRAYER MANDAPAM

THERE is a social center for women in Vellore, South India, under the American Arcot Mission. Its resident workers not only go from village to village in the open country and from street to street, knocking at doors and trying to carry to the women behind them the message of the Christ, but they also make their home in the midst of the people, trying to live as good friends and neighbors, calling and being called upon, demonstrating the power and sweetness of the Christian way more through their lives than through their words. Many Hindu women are attracted to the open social or religious meetings held in the center.

A gift from America made possible the erection of a chapel. The architecture is Dravidian throughout. It is an open building of the type often found in connection with Hindu temples, where such buildings are used as resting places for pilgrims and as shelters for people who gather to sing, to listen to holy men, or to hear the recitals of stories from the Indian religious classics. In this particular chapel are the granite pillars, the terraced roof, the stone slab floor, and the general style and shape of a Hindu *mandapam*. Note the various symbols on the pillars, carved in Indian style by Hindu workmen. The only furnishings are an altar, on which rests a brass cross, and Indian lamps of brass which use the simple hanging wicks. In front is a pool in which worshipers may wash their feet.



## PROVIDING AN ATMOSPHERE OF BEAUTY

SOMETHING in those hearts which are most sensitive to the presence of God makes them desire to approach him in a place of beauty. There was genuine rejoicing, therefore, at the Women's Christian College, Madras, when a gift from America enabled them to put up a beautiful chapel. The floor is of polished slabs of black slate and white marble. There are no seats except three or four benches at the back, for the congregation sits in Indian fashion on the floor. Moreover, there are no decorations except a thick blue curtain of many folds which lines the whole curve of the apse.

A curving colonnade connects the chapel on either side with the living quarters of the college, which are in the form of half a hollow square. The space thus inclosed contains one large and very beautiful tree, a square pond, and a formal garden of grass plots, flower beds, gravel walks and stone seats.

Each evening from dusk to bedtime a single lamp sends its soft glow throughout the chapel, giving light enough for prayer and meditation but scarcely enough to disclose who the worshiper may be. There is something peaceful and soothing in going into the chapel after sunset; and to look out through the many doors or windows into the shadowy moonlight or the clear night of stars tends to bring a sense of quiet and repose. The students feel the simple beauty of this house of prayer. "When we gather there and sit on the floor beneath the cross that surmounts the dome," says one of them, "the whole atmosphere helps us to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." Many of the students will be at work later in villages where the churches will be very plain and simple compared with this college chapel. It is hoped, however, that they may carry away such a passion for beauty that they will do their utmost to make their village churches—all too often dirty, dusty and dingy—more worthy places of worship.

The college seal consists of the little earthenware Indian lamp of the kind still used in temple decoration and in the evening worship of a home, with the motto "Lighted to lighten." From such a lamp with its flake of fire constantly renewed by the sacrifice of the oil poured in, its need of shelter from the wind, its light kindled afresh every evening from other light, comes the suggestion of a life spending itself to transform its wealth into service, flickering perhaps but not failing in the midst of temptation, and existing only to give.



THE CHAPEL OF THE WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN COLLEGE, MADRAS

## NATURALIZING CHRISTIANITY

PROBABLY nowhere in India have indigenous patterns been more wholeheartedly followed than in the Christu-kula Ashram at Tirupatur, South India, under the leadership of Dr. S. Jesudason and Dr. E. Forrester-Paton. Among Hindu religious institutions one of the most distinctive, and one that can most profitably be taken over into Christianity, is the ashram—a quiet place for prayer and meditation. In its Christian form, the ashram becomes also a place of fellowship and a center for all kinds of community service. At Tirupatur the leaders have been trying to make their Christian worship as truly Indian as possible, since “one important function of this ashram should be to make Jesus Christ as one of our own and not a foreigner to the people around.” They set out, therefore, in 1932 to build, in connection with their ashram, a Christian church adapted from the prevailing style of temple architecture in South India—the so-called Dravidian type.

The pictures on this and on the facing page will show how closely, in general plan as well as in ornamentation, this church resembles a South India temple. In the Dravidian type there is always an outer wall inclosing a rectangular space.



THE CHAPEL OF THE CHRISTU-KULA ASHRAM, TIRUPATUR



DETAIL OF GATEWAY, TIRUPATUR

The gateway into this enclosure faces the east, and is surmounted by a tower displaying an exuberance of carving, a lavishness of labor, and an elaboration of detail. Over the most sacred part of the temple (over the chancel in this Christian adaptation) is a second tower. In general the sides of these towers show a series of terraces rising tier above tier on each of which are numerous room-like cells, symbolizing the ideal monastery.

Within the rectangular enclosure of this church at Tirupatur, as in Dravidian temples, is the main hall of prayer—quite open on three sides except for the rows of pillars which support the flat stone roof. Such broad open halls are beautifully suited to the climatic conditions of South India. To a Westerner the ceiling would seem low; but this accords with Hindu architecture, and since there are no walls there is sufficient ventilation.



## THE CHANCEL AT TIRUPATUR

WHEN the worshipers have entered under the great tower above the gateway of this church at Tirupatur they approach the main prayer hall along a stone-paved way where on moonlight nights intercessory services are held. On either side are lotus-filled pools of water in which ablutions may be made. In the prayer hall they sit on the floor between the many pillars, facing the chancel, which is shown in the accompanying picture. The carved pillars, in column as well as in capital, are distinctly Dravidian—very different from any of the classic Greek types adopted by the West. On the columns and on the walls the lotus motif can be faintly discerned. To many Hindus the lotus is the symbol of the foot of God touching earth, and therefore for the Christians it can stand for the incarnation. From the capitals curving brackets extend in the form of a lily out of which issues the knob of a plantain, which by a Christian extension of Hindu symbolism may signify life out of death.

The chancel (the central recess) may be thought to be too hidden from view, but the Hindu mind is attracted by mystery. On the beam above the chancel is inscribed this verse in Tamil: "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Jesus Christ my Lord." Beneath, on the stone altar, stands a marble slab on which is carved a cross encircled with a vine creeper, and a plant with a corn of wheat about to fall into the ground. On the altar itself are the words, "*Om! Shanthi! Shanthi! Shanthi!*" which is meant to correspond to our "Holy, Holy, Holy." Except during times of divine service the chancel is closed by folding doors of wood beautifully carved in symbolic flowers. On each side of the chapel is a room for private prayer.

The architecture was planned and the carving was done by men who were not educated in the modern sense of the word, and yet who show that culture is not necessarily dependent on literacy.



THE CHANCEL AT TIRUPATUR

## A CHURCH IN A MOSLEM ENVIRONMENT

PESHAWAR, on the frontier between India and Afghanistan, is one of the oldest cities of that part of Asia. Through it, one invasion after another has pressed on to the fertile plains of the Ganges. So wild and at times so fanatical are the Afghan Moslems that the British government does not allow foreigners to proceed more than a few miles into the near-by Khyber Pass, and then only under escort. For thirty years the gospel had been preached in the bazaars and streets of the city of Peshawar and in the villages of the district, and it had been met with scorn, derision and insult. It was in this hostile environment on a public thoroughfare near one of the gates of the city that, in 1883, All Saints' Memorial Church (Church Missionary Society) was opened—one of the earliest and perhaps still the most thoroughgoing example in India of the incorporation of Moslem motifs in a Christian church.

The exterior has so many reminders of a mosque that a casual observer might mistake the church for a Moslem house of prayer. Note the small minarets, the dome seen from a great distance, the characteristic Moslem scalloped arch, the other decorative detail—all, however, surmounted by a large gilt cross showing the Christian character of the edifice. Moslems use Arabic script most decoratively in their mosques. Hence a text stands out in bold relief over the arch of the entrance: "Amen. Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen." Inside, as will be seen in the next picture, are other examples of the decorative use of texts in Moslem style.

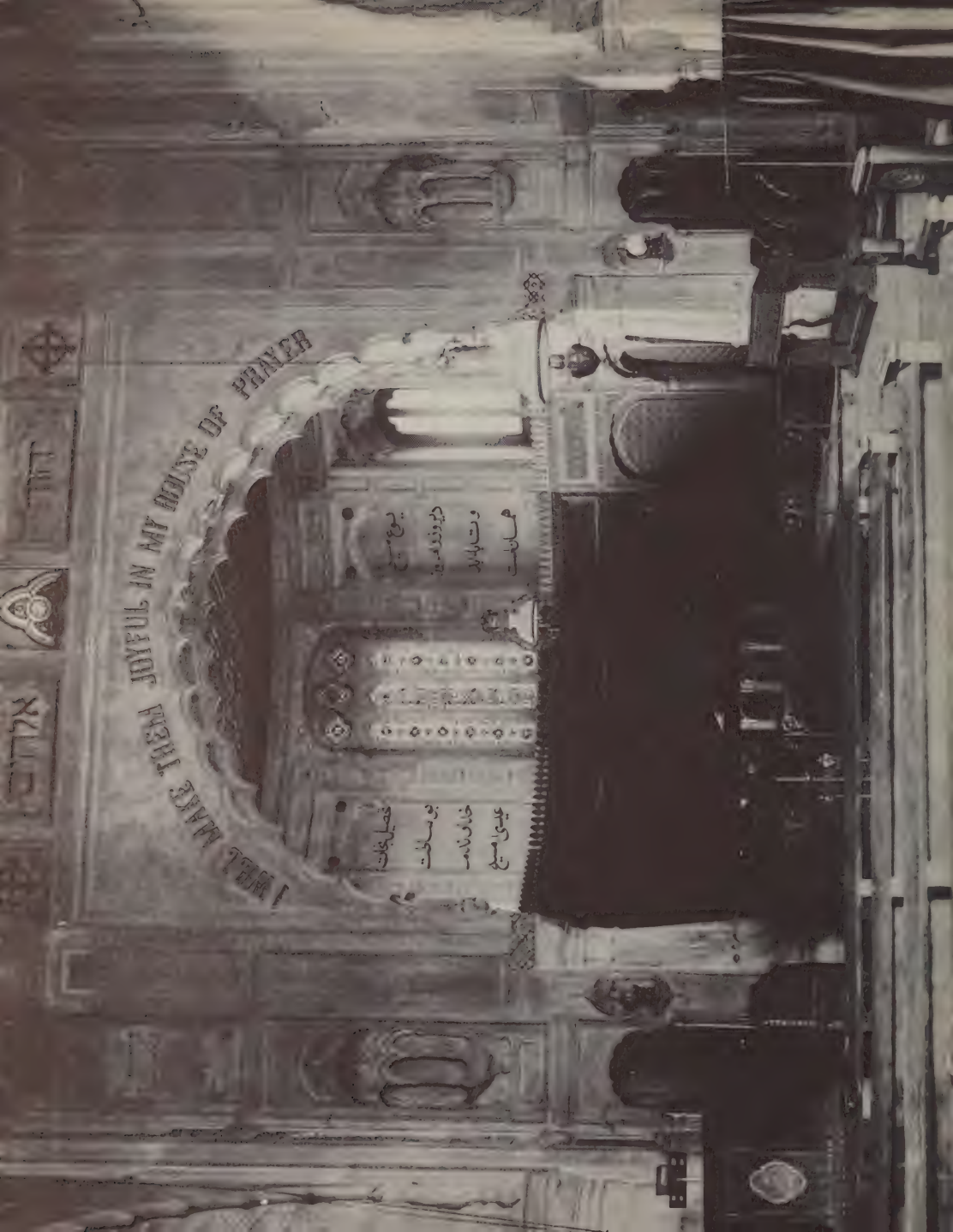




I WILL MAKE THEM  
JOYFUL IN MY HOUSE OF PRAYER

عيسى  
خالد  
يونس  
عليه السلام

عليه السلام  
عليه السلام  
عليه السلام  
عليه السلام



## USING LOCAL MOTIFS

THE interior, also, of All Saints' Memorial Church would not seem wholly strange to a Moslem resident. The chief and most exquisite feature is the screen. Beautifully carved in wood by local craftsmen, in varied but familiar patterns, this screen divides the chancel from the ambulatory behind it. One transept has been set apart for *purdah* (veiled) women by another carved screen. The pulpit and communion table are of Peshawar carved wood.

In accord with the Moslem use of quotations as a decorative feature, various texts adorn the walls. They are in Arabic, Persian, Pashtu, Urdu, Hebrew and English—all languages which are spoken in the local bazaars. Over the chancel appear the words, "I will make them joyful in my house of prayer." Two other texts in Persian, at the chancel end of the church, proclaim "The salvation which is in Jesus Christ," and "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever."

At the dedication of this building a veteran leader of the Church Missionary Society answered a possible query as to whether the style used might not be an unjustifiable departure from Christian tradition by declaring that it is "the object of the Church Missionary Society to build in every land living temples to the Lord. Whatever will conduce to this end should be made use of."

## WHERE THE CULTURAL BACKGROUND IS COMPLEX

THE church at Nirmal (Wesleyan Methodist), in northern Hyderabad, bears testimony to the fact that in those parts Jesus Christ has made his way into the hearts of all kinds of people. The congregation represents converts from the four chief castes of Hinduism and from two outcaste communities. It includes Gonds from a primitive jungle tribe, and Lombadis, whose women wear crudely shaped brass anklets, long trails of threaded shells round their waists, and ivory bracelets which in some cases cover the whole arm. These women also wear multi-colored skirts and bodices on which are sewn innumerable pieces of glass which scintillate under the blazing sun with every movement.

This central church was necessary to accommodate the steadily increasing number of Christians in this area. The domes and minor minarets suggest Moslem architecture. This impression is deepened when one passes through the large archway into the spacious, square, unroofed courtyard in which open-air services are held. On either side of this courtyard is a series of open cloisters giving simple shelter overnight for Christians from surrounding villages—the kind of service often provided in temples and mosques. At the end of the courtyard is the covered chancel with space for a small group in rainy weather.

This church illustrates a problem that must be faced in almost any area of India by one who contemplates adapting Indian architecture for the purposes of Christian worship. There are three recognized and distinct types of Hindu architecture; furthermore, Jains and Sikhs have each their own; the mosque, brought in with Islam centuries ago, has become indigenous; there are large groups of Anglo-Indians who feel a positive revulsion against any suggestion of "going native"; and the outcastes have practically nothing that can be copied. Hence, on the one hand, one might argue that in time Gothic, also, might become indigenous, thus avoiding all the risks and the problems of adapting Indian types to Christian use. On the other hand, if one feels that church buildings in India have followed too closely the styles of architecture of Europe, there is the problem of choosing some one among the various Indian styles for a congregation whose cultural heritage may be quite complex, or of setting up different styles appropriate to different cultural areas and thus running the risk of making Christianity seem divided.



WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH, NIRMAL, HYDERABAD



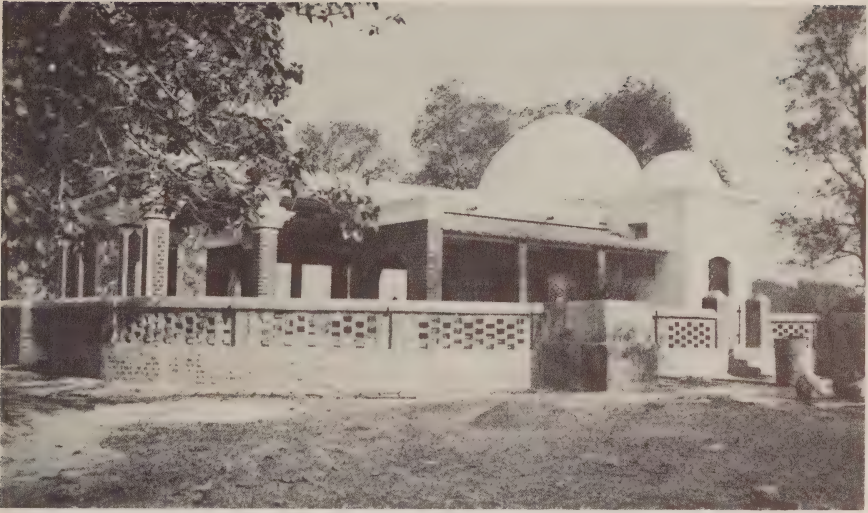
## REGARD FOR INDIAN TASTES

USHAGRAM is a school community near Asansol, Bengal, under the Methodist Episcopal Church. The pupils are housed in simple cottages forming the "village," where they live on a scale and in a manner that supposedly can be reproduced in the villages from which they have come and which they are being prepared to serve.

The original idea for a church was to build a mud-walled, open courtyard in the center of which would be a large tree in whose shade the worshipers would sit. Trees were actually dug up and, with laborious effort, transplanted to the chosen site; but in 1934 a better plan became possible of fulfillment. The definite hope for the new church was that "an Indian, no matter in what religion he has been trained, will be able to enter a common spirit of worship in this place and that he will be unhampered by any thought that here is taking place a worship which is foreign to the genius of Indian life."

Around the edge of the basal platform is a wall of open brick work to keep out dogs and cattle. Otherwise, three sides are quite open, providing in that hot climate an unobstructed circulation of air. The fourth side behind the pulpit is inclosed. In this wall is an opening in the shape of a six-foot cross and other open patterns in pierced concrete—crude imitations of the carved marble screens of early Hindu and later Mogul architecture.

Worshippers sit in simple, rural Indian fashion on the chairless floor of tile laid in mosaic design. All remove their shoes before entering. Both congregation and pastor sit throughout the service, the latter on a dais slightly raised above the congregation. Since there is no Western pulpit, the Bible lies on a low book-rest of Indian design. Indian musical instruments and Indian tunes are used. Incense burns on either side so that from whichever direction the wind blows the audience may catch the fragrance. As they enter, the worshipers place their offerings of fruit, vegetables, flowers or money on one or another table. Four flower gardens just outside give a touch of color, while two royal palms will lend dignity in years to come.



THE CHURCH AT USHAGRAM, BENGAL

## OPEN-AIR PLATFORMS AS CENTERS FOR WORSHIP

MUCH of Hindu and Moslem worship is in the open air and under the canopy of heaven. One of the commonest sights in India is to see Hindus performing their devotions on the banks of rivers or under trees. In the Indian mosque only a small part is roofed, a certain amount of seclusion being secured by a wall surrounding the open court. In many an Indian village Moslems are too poor to build a mosque with its minarets and domes, and so they content themselves with a simple rectangular platform set aside for worship.

Sad experience in mission work has shown the harmful effects of paternalism, and how easily outcaste converts may be pauperized by the unwise use of foreign money. Instead of building a little Gothic church with mission funds



VILLAGE WORSHIP PLATFORM AT BARKA, GHAZIABAD DISTRICT

for a small village group of poor Christians, or even erecting one of those crude, ugly combinations of wall and roof which so often do duty as churches but which still would be beyond the financial capacity of the people, wise advisers tell such villagers to set up a simple platform as a place for worship. Sometimes at the time of service a mat or carpet is put down to give a touch of adornment. Sometimes a cross is put up against a wall; but where converts come fresh from idolatry this must be done with caution. Without at least such a simple platform as a center, experience has shown that it is difficult to develop a program of regular worship. The accompanying pictures show the platforms for worship at Barka and Arthala, Ghaziabad District (Methodist Episcopal).

In many an Indian village, the Christians gather in the evening for a brief informal service after their work is over. After a scripture passage and a few moments of silent meditation, the music of the Christian lyrics which they so much love can be heard across the village roofs. On Sunday they may follow the Indian custom of bathing at dawn; and then, led by singers with drums, cymbals and gongs, they may come in procession to such centers as are shown here.



VILLAGE WORSHIP PLATFORM AT ARTHALA, GHAZIABAD DISTRICT

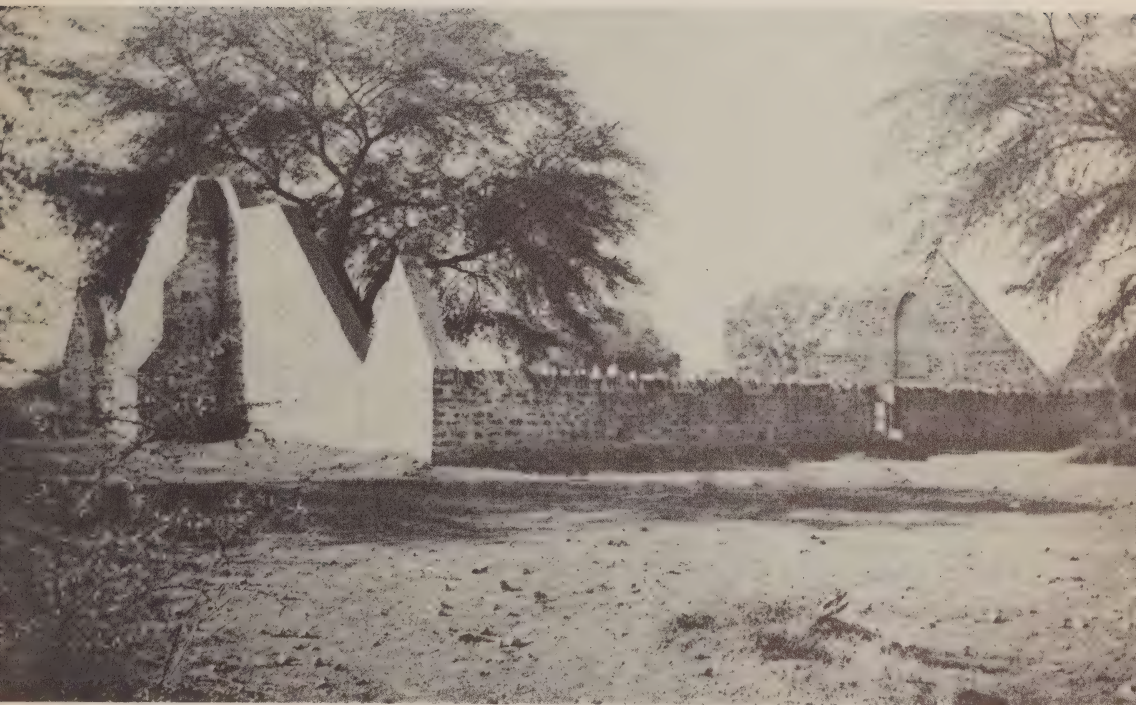


## STAYING WITHIN VILLAGE RESOURCES

WHEN a young congregation gains in resources, a low wall may be put about the platform to keep out dogs, pigs and cattle. The picture on the opposite page is of the church at Piploda, in Rajputana. The church consists of a flagged court with a four-foot wall on two sides and two high gables on the east and west for shade at the morning and evening services. The trees, also, are valued for shade. Texts of scripture in Hindi have been inscribed on the walls in recesses. The only furniture is a stone chair and table for the preacher.

Sometimes village Christians begin with a simple thatched shelter made from woven twigs or leaves raised on bamboo poles, thus providing a shady place for the people to sit out of the glare of the sun. The floor of such a church is smeared with a mixture of mud and cow dung in the native manner in order to secure a relatively smooth and dust-free surface. The altar may be of sun-dried mud, on which has been modeled in relief some colored floral design—an adaptation to Christian purposes of the ornamentation with which many village women adorn their houses.

In appraising these simple churches we must remember that Hindus have no tradition of corporate worship; that outcastes have not had any adequate places of worship but have been used to bowing down individually before a rude shrine or a tree; and that their capacity to appreciate, or their religious understanding to use, a more elaborate and expensive building is likely to be very limited. Under such circumstances, there is always the danger that the effect of a donated building costing far more than the local community can finance may be to suggest to the converts that somewhere there are unlimited reserves of wealth which may be tapped, and to non-Christians that there has been proselytism through material benefactions. But when the church springs from village conditions, when local materials, methods and precedents are used, and when the people themselves do the work, a sense of self-respect, possession, responsibility for upkeep and enthusiasm for worship are gained. To obtain such results is surely far more significant than emphasizing a particular type of architecture.



THE CHURCH AT PIPLODA, RAJPUTANA

## A CATHEDRAL-LIKE CHURCH FOR OUTCASTES

MEDAK, in the dominions of the Nizam of Hyderabad, is the center for fifty thousand Christians who were formerly outcastes. They are exceedingly poor, and their work is of a most exacting nature under hard and unsympathetic taskmasters. It was in the midst of such a people that the church shown on the facing page was built—all the more astoundingly magnificent in contrast to the extreme poverty of the people. Although these simple, often illiterate Christians had for ten years sacrificed in a very wonderful way toward the cost of their new church, bringing according to their means thank offerings of hens, goats, sheep or even money, by far the largest proportion was given by a distinguished missionary family and their personal friends in England. To this sum was added a small gift from the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society.

In favor of such a building it might be argued that the development of a movement depends, in part, upon the imponderable thing we call prestige; that it must have visibility enough to attract attention; and must appeal to the imagination of a community. In fact, a Hindu village chief on seeing the new church exclaimed: "We used to think that Christianity would soon pass away and that the missionary would leave the country, and then you would all be outcaste slaves again. We always used to think that the Christian religion was only a religion of slaves, but now this great church is a sign to us that your religion is for everybody and that for all time it is firmly established in our country, and we wish to worship your God and send our offering."

However, the building is so far beyond any hope even of approach by other communities that it ceases to be a stimulus for many. Others fear the development of an attitude of dependence. Experience shows that many a Christian community feel no responsibility for such a building, and may even shun it lest the responsibility for upkeep come upon them. The issues here raised and the principles involved obviously touch on vital aspects of mission policy which would have to be seriously considered, not only in case it were proposed to duplicate the Medak church in other parts of India, but also in connection with the use of foreign money for many a humbler venture.



THE CHURCH AT MEDAK, HYDERABAD



## A GEM OF SINGHALESE ARCHITECTURE

THE most beautiful building of Trinity College, Kandy, Ceylon, is the chapel erected on a commanding site and adorned with exquisite workmanship in wood and stone. A critic might inquire why this English school under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society should indulge in such extravagance out of all proportion to its income. The approximate cost was fifty thousand dollars.

One answer would be that its leaders wished to give outward and visible expression to their conviction about the central place of worship in school life. To go on worshipping in a building so totally devoid of architectural merit as to lack any single redeeming feature would be to associate Christianity in the minds of successive generations of youth with what is uncomely and uninspiring.

Another answer would arise from the growing realization that Christianity in Ceylon must doff its foreign garb and adopt outward forms more germane to the national genius. There are elements of Singhalese architecture appropriate and adaptable to purposes of Christian worship, the use of which would enshrine what is often misrepresented as a Western religion in a setting congenial to the taste, tradition and tropical situation of the church of Ceylon. The Church Missionary Society felt an obligation to build, so to speak, in the vernacular.

The floor of the chapel is flanked on either side by a double row of gigantic pillars. There are fifty of these columns, making a forest of sixteen-foot monoliths—square based, square capped, but the main stem octagonal, with carved panels on the square faces. The capitals which support the beams are decorated not with the Greek acanthus but with a native design roughly resembling four bells, the mouth of each bell being carved with a full-blown inverted lotus. The climate does not require walls, so that the audience may look out through the pillars to the sunset glow on the beautiful Kandyan hills. A hint for the design of the altar came from an ancient stone cistern in one of the rediscovered buried cities of Ceylon.

This chapel is Trinity's alabaster box of ointment, poured forth to associate not only beauty with worship, but also religion with race and culture.



THE CHAPEL OF TRINITY COLLEGE, KANDY, CEYLON

## THE PROBLEM IN AFRICA

THE Africans had no word in any of their languages for what we call a church. There were, of course, places and objects of various kinds—hills, groves, huts, fields or streams—made sacred by the remembered or forgotten graves of ancestors. All these things gave some visual image, something tangible for the worshiper of spirits. But there were no buildings to house congregations as such. The nearest approach to a temple was a temporary roof of grass supported on poles set up on the outskirts of the village to cover thank offerings for the harvest. A house built for the service of God was an entirely Christian idea. Under these circumstances would the effort to make Christianity indigenous best be forwarded by encouraging churches designed and built by Africans from African materials; or by erecting for them edifices which no African could possibly have built or could keep in repair without European instruction and supervision?

At one extreme are some who would oppose fine foreign buildings. In their view, as a new culture spreads among a primitive people it should not be accompanied by great changes lest they prove too disturbing a factor. To start with, they would simply have the people plant a tall palm grove and worship in its shade. Until recent years the church at Kikuyu was a forest avenue. The type of structure used in small, round, private huts can be slightly extended for small, oval churches. Style and dimensions will be practically dependent on the materials obtainable in the neighborhood—trees from the forest, bamboo canes, reeds from the river bank, and possibly clay from the soil beneath their feet. In swampy regions there is no good clay and nothing better than mud-and-wattle walls can be attempted. Grass or palm leaves for thatching the roof are collected from the neighboring bush. Reeds can be used for spanning a small roof, but width of span is definitely limited by the supporting properties of the wood available. Tiles would probably require rafters brought in from outside. No measurements are made, and if there is a plan it is governed by custom. What matters if a wall be somewhat out of line—a crooked wall may be as rain-proof as a straight one! Within there may be a mud platform in front, and sometimes a reading desk improvised out of a post stuck in the ground with a board across the top; or the desk may be made of sun-dried mud. Instead of wooden pews there are rows of low mud seats. Sometimes a wooden gate is provided to keep out chickens, goats and sheep.



BUILDING A CHURCH IN SOUTHERN NIGERIA, WEST AFRICA



The picture on page 83 shows one such church of the Church Missionary Society in the process of being built in Southern Nigeria. Rough poles of split palm strong enough to bear the weight of rafters and thatch must be available. Upon the rafters are placed lines of light cross pieces about six inches apart to form a latticework. The mats are tied on to the cross laths, each row overlapping the one below. Finally, some long pieces of bamboo may be tied over the roof to prevent the wind from tearing off the mats. The whole framework is bound together by a liberal use of cane.

The great trouble with such churches is that they last only about five years—rain, wind, fire and white ants do their certain work. It is always more difficult to get the people to put up a second building. "This church is already useless; if we build another it will soon be gone." Even improved burned bricks do not keep the termites out of the thatched roofs. Hence, owing to the incessant cost of repair and renewal demanded by temporary buildings, there is a tendency to erect structures of a more permanent nature than those of mud walls and thatched roofs. Wherever a congregation gets established the next step is to displace mud by brick or stone, and thatch by corrugated iron. This is all the more natural since changes are taking place very rapidly in Africa, where the younger folk are leaving their village homes for work in other spheres. The new fashion is to erect bigger houses provided with doors, windows, walls and roofs. This trend must be considered in building churches for the future.

However, even though the African may have to take building methods and materials from the West, Africa has its own art forms. Through the centuries simple artists have struggled to impress thoughts and longings on ornaments and symbols of earthenware, wood, copper, leather and textiles. Here and there is to be found a mission or a missionary who believes this art ought zealously to be encouraged and preserved, and who stimulates Africans to decorate the walls of their village churches with murals, hangings, mats and banners in the native style and using native materials. The catechists of a great mission in Southern Rhodesia were encouraged to build their own churches with as little interference from Europeans as possible, using color and decoration appropriate to the people who worship there. It is said that the result was often delightful. For example, St. Faith's (Society for the Propagation of the Gospel), Rusapi, is decorated in the native manner in colored clays with bold, rough designs of leaves, animals as tokens of the local tribes, and occasional adaptations of Christian symbolism. One can find crucifixes modeled in wood or clay, crudely but with deep feeling and infinitely to be preferred to shop-made soulless articles.

Too little has been done in the way of consecrating to Christian use Africa's gifts of painting, wood-carving and sculpture. There is real danger here, for Africa has less power of cultural resistance than have the more developed civilizations of Asiatic countries. Since the products of mass production by the West are rapidly displacing old handicrafts, the church must act without delay if she is really to lead in enriching Christian worship with the gifts of Africa.

Africa has an even greater treasure to bring into the worship of the church than her arts. Although she has developed no great temples to focus worship such as are found in Hinduism or Buddhism, Africa still has some of the unspoiled qualities of a child race—qualities which have no small place in the kingdom of God. From this animistic background, with its vivid sense of the reality of the unseen world of spirits, often comes a remarkable capacity for worship and a striking atmosphere of reverence and devotion. There is a readiness for authority and discipline, a delight in music, a quick emotion, and an appreciation of ceremonial. Africa has her own “glories and treasures” with which to enrich the Christian heritage.



A TYPICAL CHURCH INTERIOR, TANGANYIKA TERRITORY

## AN EXPANDED HUT AS CATHEDRAL

ONLY about sixty years ago (1875) the explorer, Stanley, wrote his famous letter on behalf of a pagan king asking for Christian teachers for Uganda. The first Christian services were held in a mud-and-wattle building, later destroyed by a Moslem uprising. Soon the poles of a second simple church were set up.

But chiefs and church leaders visioned a more permanent church. In 1892 the Baganda Christians, amid a vast concourse and much rejoicing, dedicated their third church, located on the summit of Namirembe Hill. In plan it was like a giant African hut, the roof being supported by a great forest of trees which had been carried in by hundreds of men with drum-beating and singing. The corners of the roof nearly touched the ground. However, no more than two years had passed when a severe tropical storm caused the building to fall like a house of cards. Nothing daunted, the Christian chiefs promptly organized the building of a fourth church (the first Uganda cathedral). It was of the same style as the former church, and is shown in the accompanying picture—probably the noblest building ever attempted in what might be called the native hut architecture.

There followed years of quietness and prosperity; and hence the Baganda people, and more especially the Baganda chiefs, set their hearts in 1904 on a second cathedral of a more permanent sort, to hold four thousand. Help in planning came from Europeans, but chiefs and people carried clay on their heads with which to make the bricks. The roof, however, was still of poles covered with grass and reeds, so that, when it was struck by lightning in 1910, the cathedral was entirely destroyed.

The Uganda church folk were undismayed by this further catastrophe. Their devotion manifested itself in planning that very year for another and greater cathedral of burnt brick, to be roofed with sawn timbers and tiles. Chiefs for years taxed themselves forty per cent of their income from rents; and clerks, carpenters and other artisans gave a percentage of their wages. This sacrificial giving in the heart of Africa, helped by fellow Christians in Britain, made possible in 1919 the present beautiful and modernly constructed cathedral—a great achievement in the face of innumerable obstacles, although it does not carry with it the African atmosphere.



THE FIRST CATHEDRAL, NAMIREMBE, UGANDA



## CONTRIBUTING ARCHITECTURE TO A CONTINENT

For reasons already given many missions are not willing to rest with a simple setting for the worship of a simple people. They have taken the initiative in setting up great churches in which the people's religious capacities may expand—in building that to which spirits may rise. Thus these missions are introducing not only a new religion, but also a new architecture unconceived before by African tribes.

It is said that the building of the Blantyre church, Nyasaland, under the Church of Scotland, touched the African mind as few things else have done. Inspiration came to the whole Christian population. Various native congregations heard its call to attempt something better than reeds, grass, bamboo and mud. Here was a church rising as a visible and permanent witness to their new-found faith in God. Again, when the great new cathedral at Johannesburg was consecrated and Africans gathered to it who had known only the cramped conditions of their own little churches, there came a glimpse of something scarcely realized before. It is said that nothing in all the week of dedication equaled the moment when the native people came to their own within those walls. "It is a great thing when a body comes to find a soul, but here was a soul finding at long last a body in which for the first time it could really expand and function."

On the opposite page is a picture of the church at Elat, the first of its kind in all Cameroun. It was completed in 1933. It was only in 1893 that Christianity was brought to these people. In contrast to this present structure, picture their first church building: a large shed with no walls, doors or windows. Its seats were of split logs with the round side up. There was a small rude rostrum backed by a blackboard, showing the double use of the building. Six members on the front seat wore imported cloth, the other men wore loin cloths of bark, ornaments, fetishes and palm oil, and each one carried a gun, spear or cutlass, so as to be able to fight man, beast or bush. The women wore raffia bustles, leaf bandages, fetishes and ornaments. The children were dressed in their "birthday suits." From such a beginning the Elat church has grown until it has come to be known as the largest Presbyterian church in the world.



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ELAT, FRENCH CAMEROUN



"THE SHEPHERDS," BY LUKE CH'EN

## A MOVEMENT TOWARD NATIVE PAINTING

WHAT should be the policy with reference to Christian painting in the churches of Asia and Africa? Should one aim at historical, ethnological and physical accuracy in the picture, or should the supreme interest center in the liturgical and the spiritual? Much of Oriental painting is not based on realism and, moreover, it is capable of rendering religious subjects with a high degree of devotional dignity. In particular, should one always paint our Lord and the people of the Holy Land as Jews in the dress of that day; or, just as Italian painters set Italian madonnas and saints against Italian backgrounds, should Chinese trees bend over the Good Samaritan and a Chinese farmer sow the seed on good and bad ground? Should the Good Shepherd hold an animal unknown to a whole nation, or the Madonna hold a child in a manner strange to the cultural habit of the mother who gazes upon the picture?

In the cathedral of Masasi there is a picture of our Lord in a Zulu hut, and it is said that an African deacon, standing in front of that picture, had tears on his cheeks as for the first time he looked at a picture showing Africans near our Lord. The bishop of that diocese is impressed with the danger of using pictures showing only white people. Moreover, many members of the younger churches of Asia know almost nothing about their own Christian saints and martyrs for the faith, since no pictures of them or of incidents in their lives have ever been painted. Christians of today are in danger of getting the impression that a martyrology would contain only the names of saints of the white race.

Hence, in recent years, individual Protestants have encouraged native artists to meditate upon the Gospels, possibly making some study of traditional Christian painting, and then to give expression to their talents, using all the artistic values of an indigenous style. There exists, furthermore, a Roman Catholic art guild in Japan whose aim is to develop the Christian element in Japanese art. Several exhibitions of the work produced have been held in Tokyo. In fact, the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith has officially registered approval of the use of native modes of expression, of introducing Christian art in a truly catholic spirit but not in the form of importations from the West.

A copy of "The Shepherds" by Luke Ch'en, a Chinese artist, is reproduced here.

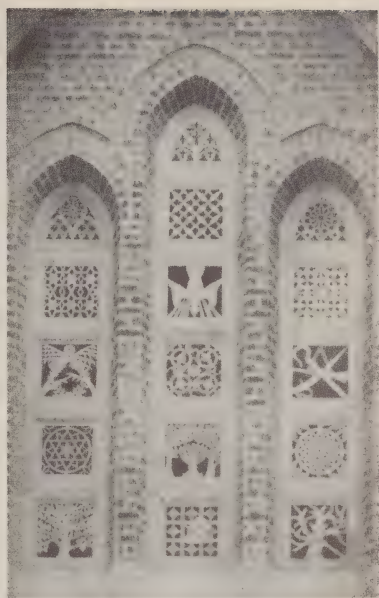
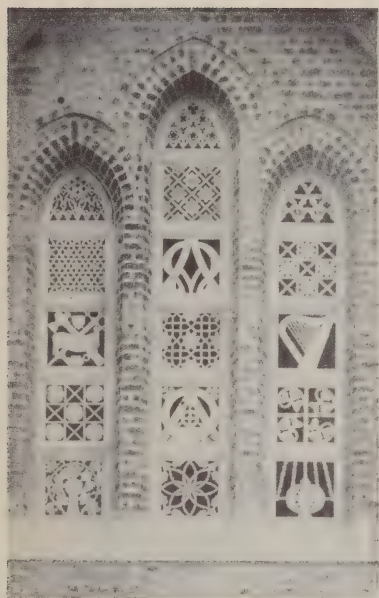


## SYMBOLISM IN THE EXPANSION OF CHRISTIANITY

WE are coming to be deeply interested in the integration of personality and in the release of power. This cannot always be accomplished solely through the will or through the intellect. Hence religion has used ritual and symbols. Furthermore, religion has to be maintained and communicated. But just because religion is one of the higher and more spiritual aspects of human growth its cultivation requires the aid of such suggestions and such stimuli as the insights of the race have developed. Modern psychology is showing that human behavior is influenced not alone by ideas, but by that which appeals to the subconscious as well. In mediating Christianity, therefore, to a people to which it is new the messenger must appraise the value, for that people, of the Christian symbolism of the West and must keep an open mind toward time-wrought avenues or types of suggestion already embodied in the religious culture of the group to which he goes. Almost every one of the preceding sketches has revealed some decision regarding the use of symbols.

Two windows in the Divinity School of Stevenson College, Ahmedabad, India, combine something of East and West. Alternate panels are geometric patterns characteristic of the pierced marble tracery of Mogul tombs. In between these panels are Christian symbols familiar in the West. The window shown at the right represents the place of the Holy Spirit in the illumination of the intellectual life—the Spirit as a dove with the sevenfold ray of divine wisdom, the seven-branched lamp fed with a perpetual flow of oil from living trees, the dry tree with the ax laid to its root, and the good tree laden with the fruit of the Spirit. In the upper right-hand panel is represented the divinity student's future work symbolized by the warrior's sword, the shepherd's crook and the watchman's horn; and in the upper left, the wreath and palm branches suggest his future reward. The other window in the chapel, shown at the left, suggests the worship of the Holy Trinity through him who is Alpha and Omega, by praise, prayer, the word and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

A somewhat daring use of Buddhist symbols has been made by Karl Ludwig Reichelt in the chapel of his Brotherhood of Religious Friends near Nanking—an effort to lead Buddhists to faith in Jesus Christ as the only one in whom the profoundest ideals of Buddhism find their complete fulfilment. Above the



DETAIL OF WINDOWS, DIVINITY SCHOOL OF STEVENSON COLLEGE,  
AHMEDABAD

gateway is a cross rising out of a lotus lily. The lotus symbolizes the aspiration to rise fresh and pure above the filth and slime of this world; and the cross indicates that in Christ the best in Buddhism is fulfilled. Within is to be found a beautiful altar made in true Chinese style. It has a red lacquer finish and is richly adorned with golden symbols—the lily of purity, the cross of sacrifice, the sun of righteousness, the fire and water of the Spirit's cleansing, the swastika of cosmic unity and perfect peace, the fish of Eastern and Western sanctity, and the Greek monogram for Christ. The other furnishings and apparatus used in worship are chosen to call up the holiest associations in the minds of the worshipers. The two tall candlesticks on the altar are in the form of the sacred white crane. The red candles, so common in Chinese ceremonies, are lighted at the beginning of the service to flood the altar with light. The smoke and the fragrance of the incense between the candlesticks rise up as a symbol of aspiration.



SHRINE OF THE HOUSE OF THE MERCIFUL SAVIOR, WUCHANG

In the little garden shrine of the House of the Merciful Savior, Wuchang, China, is another happy combination of symbolism. The plain cross makes it unmistakably Christian; and the little tiled, curved roof just as unmistakably identifies it as Chinese. The crippled, blind or orphaned children in this home must feel that this shrine belongs to them.

There are, unquestionably, dangers in the adoption by Christians of symbols from a non-Christian culture. For one thing, these never come over bare of their long-time meanings. Often we may be ignorant of what a certain symbolism has stood for in times past and what it signifies today. But while there is the danger of using a form which has real idolatrous significance, there is also the danger of altogether overlooking the possible noble implications of a symbol, and hence deciding to bar its use instead of building it into the Christian heritage. Hindus love to take a handful of flowers or rose petals to their temples; should an habitual symbolic act of this sort be ignored in developing Christian worship? Again, there is danger that old symbols which have the sanction of ages of reverence may be forbidden without taking sufficient care to see that new and sounder ones come to have a real hold on the imagination and the emotions.

Similarly there are dangers in an uncritical introduction of the Christian symbolism of the West, for it is not easy to know what is going on in the mind of the user of a new form. An eagle with wings outspread as lectern for the scriptures is for Western Christians the symbol of inspiration, but an uninformed sudra on entering a church in India bowed with clasped hands before it as a god. In another Indian church where a cross had recently been installed by a missionary, it was found that a child had left a clay lamp burning near the cross and had garlanded it with flowers. The aged Indian pastor was alarmed, and it was only after a long argument that the cross was allowed to remain as a symbol of loving service and sacrifice for others and a reminder of what Christ did for us. But there was to be no garlanding. This whole range of concern manifestly is one in which the best and most matured judgments of both the older and the younger churches should be enlisted.









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